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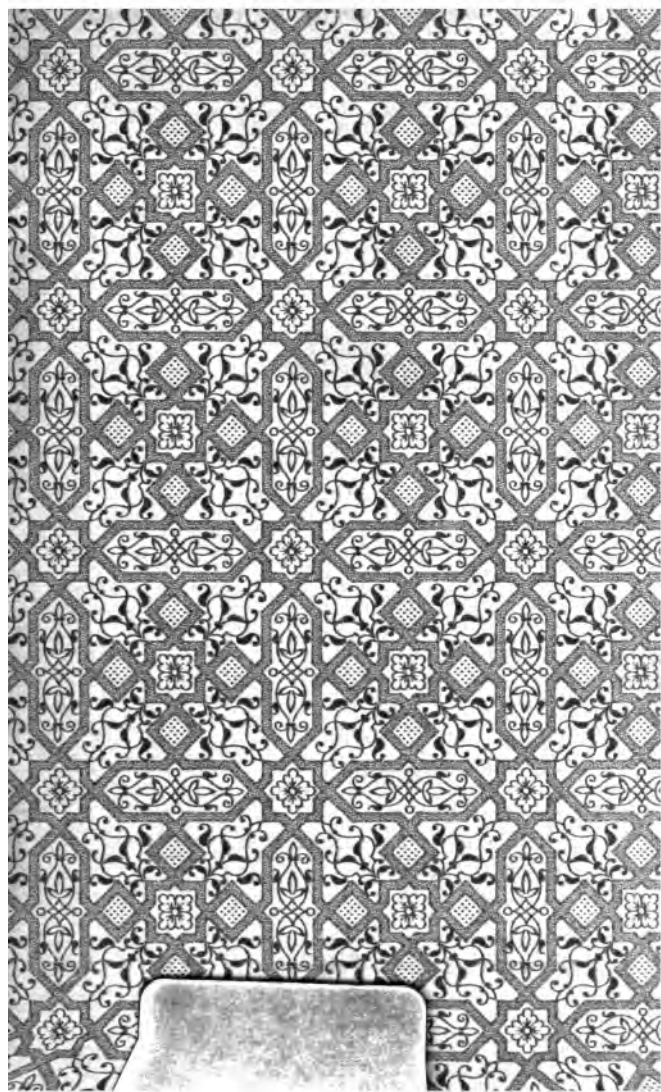
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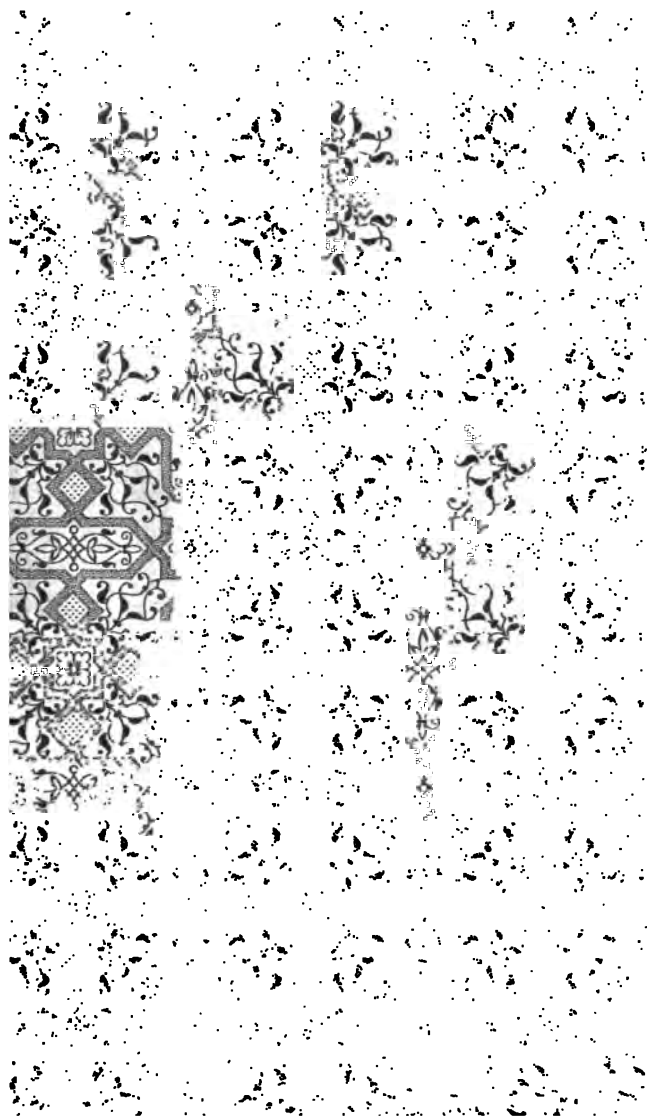
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ROBERT MOFFAT

THE
AFRICAN
MISSIONARY.



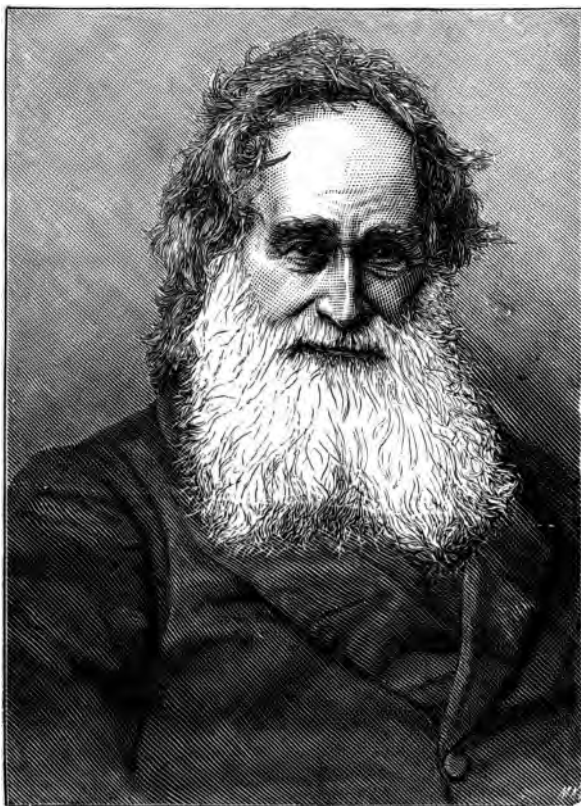






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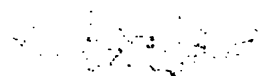
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ROBERT MOFFAT,

AFRICAN MISSIONARY.

BY THE

REV. JABEZ MARRAT,

AUTHOR OF 'DAVID LIVINGSTONE, MISSIONARY AND DISCOVERER.'

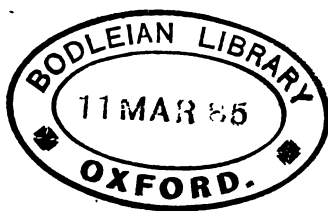


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PREFACE.

DR. MOFFAT laboured in connection with the London Missionary Society, but in his large heart there was generous appreciation of the efforts made by all Protestant missionary organisations for the diffusion of the truth in heathen lands. His kindly feeling was reciprocated, and his successes were hailed by Christians of every name as proofs of the power of the Gospel to elevate and purify the lowest and most polluted tribes of mankind, and as encouragements to yet more strenuous endeavours for the honour of Christ in the dark regions of the earth. 'Our Robert Moffat,' said the Rev. J. Fleming, a clergyman of the Church of England, at a meeting of the London Missionary Society. The speaker was interrupted by a burst of applause, and to the delight of the audience added, 'Yes, our Robert Moffat, for I cannot allow that he is only yours; such a man as Robert Moffat belongs to all the Church of God.'

Whatever may be the ecclesiastical position of readers of the following pages, they will admire the Christian heroism of the man, and give thanks to God for such an example of perseverance in a cause so noble and beneficent as that to which he devoted the energies of his life. To the young especially the narrative is commended with the hope that it will interest their minds, and excite them to greater activity in tasks associated with Christian Missions.

The principal authorities for the facts adduced are Moffat's *South Africa*, and *A Life's Labour in South Africa*.

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CHAPTER I.

Life Consecrated to God.

'I sat at evening in the shade,
A Bible on my knee ;
Still heaven beautiful above,
Cool air around me free.

And thoughts upon my spirit moved,
Stirr'd by the evening's charm,
Soft as the clouds that floated by
Upon the heaven calm.

And turning Godward, every thought
Found beauty and a rest,
As grey clouds sunward travelling
Grow golden in the west.'

T. T. LYNCH.

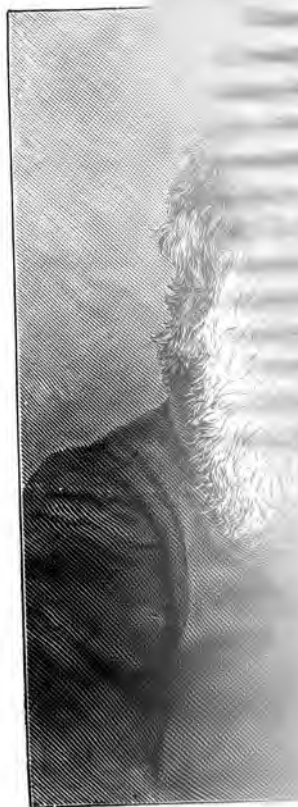
ROBERT MOFFAT was born at Ormiston, near Haddington, in 1795. When a child he was taken from that pleasant village to Carron Shore, where his father had an appointment in the Customs. In the home beside the Carron Water he felt the influence of parental piety, and was taught to read and value the Holy Scriptures. Addressing a large gathering of children a short time before his return to Africa in 1843, he described himself as having been a Sunday scholar, and told how he had remembered the loving words of his pious mother when lions were roaring and hyenas howling around him in African deserts. In boyhood he manifested an adventurous spirit, and was ambitious to be a sailor. He tried a voyage in a coasting vessel, but, not finding the romance or pleasure he had anticipated in seafaring life, returned to school, and began the study of botany and horticulture in order to qualify himself for the position of a skilled gardener. His father removing to Inverkeithing in Fifeshire, he obtained employment near that town in the gardens of the Earl of Moray. While mowing the grass on the lawns, or pruning the apricots and the vines, he had no thought of Africa as the scene of labours by which he would open a paradise of blessing before benighted sons of Ham, and win honours not to be bartered even *for the proudest earldom of Scotland.* But God

had a work for him to do on the continent which had been so long dark and desolate, and by His providence drew him over the sea and along the path to the kraal of Africaner, and the fountain of Kuruman.

Scotch gardeners then, as now, had a good repute in England, and he was offered a situation in Cheshire. On leaving home his mother accompanied him to the boat in which he was to cross the Firth of Forth. When they came to the spot where she was to bid him farewell, she said, 'Now, my Robert, let us stand here a few minutes; for I wish to ask one favour of you before we part, and I know you will not refuse doing what your mother asks.' The favour was that he would promise to read a chapter in the Bible every morning and every evening. He could not resist her tears and touching appeals, and said he would do as she wished. It was enough; and to other suitable words she added, 'Now I shall return home with a happy heart, inasmuch as you have promised to read the Scriptures daily. O, Robert, my son, read much in the New Testament. Read much in the Gospels, the blessed Gospels. There you cannot well go astray. If you pray, the Lord Himself will teach you.'

In his new situation he remembered his promise, but read the Scriptures more from a sense of duty to his mother than for the sake of their spiritual lessons. But as he read on, time after time, the sacred words smote his heart, and he had a painful consciousness of guilt in the

PREFACE.



REV. ROBERT HALL.



CHRISTIAN AFRICANER.

sight of God. For many weeks he was miserable, his soul being, to use his own expression, 'like a ship in a tempest.' But light and peace came in answer to his repeated prayer. He lived alone in the garden lodge, and one evening, while reading the Epistle to the Romans, he was enabled to rest his soul on Christ, and to rejoice in the assurance of justification by faith.

Wishing to have communion with Christian people, he at times attended a Methodist service held at a farm-house in the Warrington circuit, when the Rev. J. Beaumont was one of its ministers. 'The position I occupied,' he wrote to a Wesleyan minister, in a letter dated January 7th, 1877, 'rendered it extremely difficult for me to leave my charge, and go to any distance. I discovered after considerable inquiry that the Wesleyans came on certain Sabbaths to a farm-house some miles from the place of my abode. When it was possible for me to leave, I went thither, and occasionally heard Mr. Beaumont or a local preacher. From curiosity I once went to Warrington to see a love-feast. I had comparatively little intercourse with the Wesleyans, but the more I knew of them the more I admired them for their Gospel simplicity, love, and zeal. From this early acquaintance I have always felt an attachment; and have had the honour and the privilege of much delightful intercourse with the missionaries of that society since the days of Barnabas Shaw.'

It is pleasant to find even a slight connection

between two such honoured names as Beaumont and Moffat. When the former visited the farmhouse mentioned by the latter, he was a young man, and had not the mastery over his congregations for which he afterwards became so famous. He was often depressed by a sense of failure, and, returning to his home, would throw himself on a couch, and weep as he exclaimed, 'I shall never be a preacher.' But his persistent endeavours were successful, and the time came when he was justly recognised as one of the greatest orators of Methodism. His fine presence heightened the effect of his varied intonation, bold imagery, and magnificent periods. From strains of subdued eloquence he would frequently rise to thunders which caused a solemn awe to come over his hearers. But the triumphs of his elocution were always kept in subserviency to the evangelical themes in which he delighted, and, while flashing splendours of thought and illustration from the pulpit, his only desire was the salvation of souls. His power is now little more than a tradition, but there are still those living who remember what he was in his prime, and can repeat parts of sermons which were to them as new revelations of God's glory in the Gospel. His death, so sudden, and in such sacred surroundings, was like a translation. He died when giving out a grand hymn in one of the Hull chapels; thus gaining his eternal rest while the Scotchman who heard him years before was still toiling for Christ in Africa.

Robert Moffat, having experienced a change of

resolved to go to sea again, and get landed on some island or foreign shore, where I might teach poor heathen to know the Saviour.'

Soon after the incident of the placard, a Wesleyan Conference was held in Manchester, and Mr. Moffat, accompanied by a young man with whom he was intimate, went over to attend some of the public services. While in Manchester, he heard William Roby, and was very much pleased with his appearance and discourse. In the evening, the lady at whose house he and his friend were staying said to him that Mr. Roby was a great missionary man, and sometimes sent out young men to the heathen. This remark excited in him a desire to see the minister at his own house, but, being of a retiring disposition, it was only after much prayer that he mustered courage to go. He told his companion what he intended doing, and wished him to go also, but could only obtain from him a promise to wait within sight until he returned.

'Though the distance,' he wrote, 'we had to walk was more than a mile, it seemed too short for me to get my thoughts in order. Reaching the end of a rather retired street, I proceeded with slow step. On getting to the door, I stood a minute or two, and my heart failed, and I turned back towards my friend, but soon took fresh courage, and came back again. The task of knocking at the good man's door seemed very hard. A second time I reached the door, and had *scarcely set my foot on the first step when my*

heart again failed. I feared I was acting presumptuously.'

At last he ventured to knock; the door was opened, and he was shown into the parlour. Mr. Roby appeared, and the simple tale was told, how, having given himself to Christ, he wished to be a helper in the missionary cause. The kind minister listened with interest, and said he would write about him to the directors of the London Missionary Society. He went back to his employment, but after a few weeks received a letter from Mr. Roby urging him to return to Manchester, as he wished to get him into a situation near enough to his own residence for him to be properly examined as to his fitness for missionary work; and, if his fitness was manifested, to be guided in suitable studies. When he reached Manchester, Mr. Roby took him to several of his friends, in the hope of securing for him an engagement in a garden, a mercantile house, or a bank. There being no opening, Mr. Roby remarked, 'I have still one friend who employs many men, to whom I can apply, provided you have no objection to go into a nursery garden.' The reply to this was that he would go anywhere or do anything for which he had the ability.

'Very providentially,' the narrative continues, 'Mr. Smith, of Dukinfield, happened to be in town, and at once agreed that I should proceed to his nursery garden. Thus was I led by a way I knew not for another important end; for, had I obtained a situation in Manchester, I might not

bless you in this respect when I am gone to heaven. I feel that I love God, and that He has done much for me, of which I am totally unworthy. My former life is stained with blood; but Jesus Christ has pardoned me, and I am going to heaven. O, beware of falling into the same evils into which I have led you frequently; but seek God, and He will be found of you to direct you."

Such were the peaceful counsels and hopeful words of the man whose black hands had often been red with the blood of his enemies, and whose swarthy face had often caught the glare of farmsteads which he had ruthlessly set in a blaze. The great missionary who drew him to Christ has a crown jewelled with many resplendent memorials of heroic service done in the cause of God; but none is larger or brighter than that on which the name of AFRICANER is graven.



CHAPTER III.

Adventures and Perils.



'The sultry summer noon is past ;
And mellow evening comes at last,
With a low and languid breeze,
Fanning the mimosa trees,
Which cluster o'er the tangled vale,
And oft perfume the panting gale
With fragrance faint—that seems to tell
Of primrose tufts, in Scottish dell,
Peeping forth in tender spring,
When the blithe lark begins to sing.
But soon 'mid Afric's landscape lone
Such reminiscences are gone ;
Soon we raise the eye to range
O'er prospects wild, grotesque, and strange—
Sterile mountains, rough and steep,
That bound abrupt the valley deep,
Heaving to the clear blue sky
Their ribs of granite, bare and dry ;
And ridges, by the torrents worn,
Thinly sheath'd with scraggy thorn,
Which fringes Nature's savage dress,
Yet scarce relieves her nakedness.'

THOMAS PRINGLE.

ON the last day of October, 1810, a tall, slim youth, with dark hair and keen, sparkling eyes, went on board a ship bound for Africa. The youth was Robert Moffat, on his way to the work for which he had been solemnly set apart in the Surrey Chapel. As he stood on the deck, and saw the steep cliffs and rounded hills fade into dim shadows beneath the autumnal sky, and thought of the home in Inverkeithing, and the dear friends in Lancashire, he experienced a very painful sense of loneliness. But he was not utterly forlorn, for, above the wild music of the winds and waters, he heard the voice of the Lord calling him by name, and bidding him be of good courage. On the voyage he had ample time for prayer and meditation, while the great ocean, bounded only by the purple ring of the horizon, reminded him of the immensity of the love he was about to unfold before African barbarians.

When he reached the Cape, he had to solicit the permission of the British governor to visit the heathen beyond the boundaries of the colony. This was refused for some time; but the young missionary, while waiting, was not idle. Lodging with a godly Hollander, he acquired the Dutch language, so as to be able to preach to the Boers and their native servants. His repeated applications to the governor were at length successful,

and he started for Great Namaqualand, the scene of his intended labours. Going up the country, he asked one of the Boers to allow him to spend the night at his house. The Boer was rude and inhospitable, and blustered as much as he could have done if his farm and his oxen had been suddenly demanded; but Mr. Moffat, not frightened by the storm of words, said to himself, 'I'll e'en try the guid wife.' She was a kindly woman, and, after promising him food and shelter, requested him to preach. He gladly responded to the request, and went to the barn in which the service was to be held. There were only white faces before him; for, though the Boer had a hundred Hottentots in his service, not one of them was present. Turning to his surly host, he asked, 'May none of your servants come?' 'Hottentots!' was the loud, sarcastic reply, 'are you come to preach to Hottentots? Go to the mountains, and preach to the baboons; or, if you like, I'll fetch my dogs, and you may preach to them.' The Scotchman was more than a match for the Boer, for he gave out as his text, 'Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.' The words smote the heart of the Boer, and he cried out, 'No more of that; I'll bring you all the Hottentots in the place?' He at once summoned them to the barn, and at the close of the service said to the preacher, 'Who hardened your hammer to deal my head such a blow. I'll never object to the preaching of the Gospel to Hottentots again.'

tantalising the fainting traveller with pictures of lakes surrounded by belts of shadowing wood, and studded with islets lovely as relics of paradise. He also knew what it was to be in danger from the fangs of deadly snakes, to be followed by hungry lions, and to be exposed to storms, when the lightning was so vivid as to cause temporary blindness, and the thunder was terrible as if the planets overhead were crashing against each other in gigantic war.

When at Africaner's kraal, he resolved to go northward and explore a country on the borders of Damaraland, which was said to be, on account of its supply of water, suitable for a mission station. The district over which he passed was mainly a dreary stretch of granite, interspersed with low bushes and thin herbage, giving food to zebras, wild asses, and giraffes. While on the journey, his principal diet was the flesh of zebras and giraffes. The meat from the latter was so tough as to seem like leather; and even after it was beaten between two stones, he had difficulty in masticating it. One day the guide led him and his companions to a ravine, which in the distance had a cheerful appearance; but the pleasant green was found to be that of a poisonous euphorbia. Honey was taken from the fissures of the rocks and eagerly devoured. Very soon, first one and then another complained of painful heat in the throat, and a native coming up, and seeing their hands and faces besmeared with the honey, said, 'You had better not eat the honey of this

vale. Do you not see the poison bushes, from the flowers of which the bees extract the honey and the poison too?' On hearing this they drank the little water that remained in the vessels; but their sufferings increased in severity, and it was not until several days had elapsed that they got rid of their unpleasant sensations. When they reached their destination, they found water by digging in the ground, but the people were prejudiced against 'hat-wearers,' and they concluded it would be folly to attempt a settlement in that part of the country. Though the people were suspicious, they spent some days with them, and preached the Gospel, to which they listened attentively.

On their way back they halted not far from a small fountain, and a camel-thorn tree about twelve feet high. A man told Mr. Moffat a remarkable story in connection with the tree. He said that, when a boy, he was walking one day towards the village, and turned aside to drink at the fountain. Stretching himself on its grassy brink, he fell asleep. When he awoke, he saw a giraffe feeding on the shoots of the tree, and at a little distance a lion creeping stealthily and preparing to leap on his prey. The lion bounded towards the head of the giraffe, but, missing his grasp, fell on the thorn, which had a flat, bushy top. His struggles to escape were in vain, and he perished in his strange captivity. Mr. Moffat saw some of his bones under the tree, and hair on its branches. The lion will sometimes mount the back of a

giraffe, and cling there until the stately animal falls or throws him off. Two of the giraffes shot by Mr. Moffat's party had marks of the lion's claws on their shoulders, and of his teeth in their necks. Mr. Moffat mentioned the above facts to Mr. Pringle, when he met him in Cape Town, and the latter wrote the following lines :

'Wouldst thou view the lion's den?
Search afar from haunts of men—
Where the reed-encircled fountain
Oozes from the rocky mountain;
By its verdure far descried,
'Mid the desert brown and wide.

Close beside the sedgy brim
Couchant lurks the lion grim,
Waiting till the close of day
Brings again the destined prey.
Heedless, at the ambushed brink,
The tall giraffe stoops down to drink;
Upon him straight the savage springs
With cruel joy! The desert rings
With clanging sound of desperate strife;
For the prey is strong, and strives for life;
Plunging oft with frantic bound,
To shake the tyrant to the ground;
Then bursts like whirlwind through the waste
In hope to 'scape by headlong haste.
In vain! the spoiler on his prize
Rides proudly—tearing as he flies.
For life—the victim's utmost speed
Is mustered in this hour of need—
For life—for life—his giant might
He strains, and pours his soul in flight
And, mad with terror, thirst, and pain,
Spurns with wild hoof the thundering plain.

'Tis vain; the thirsty sands are drinking
His streaming blood—his strength is sinking—

The victor's fangs are in his veins—
His flanks are streaked with sanguine stains
His panting breast in foam and gore
Is bathed : he reels—his race is o'er !
He falls—and, with convulsive throe,
Resigns his throat to the raging foe,
Who revels amidst his dying moans ;
While, gathering round to pick his bones,
The vultures watch, in gaunt array,
Till the gorged monarch quits his prey.'

One night, when on the homeward journey, Mr. Moffat and his companions came to a pool in the bed of a river, and resolved to camp there for the night. In accordance with their usual custom they had united worship before preparing for sleep. Their song of praise had scarcely died away, when, alarmed by the roar of a lion, the oxen rushed upon them, scattering hats, Bibles, hymn books, and the flaming brands of the fires in wild confusion on the ground. The danger was great, yet no one was injured, and the oxen, which had gone up a gloomy ravine, were brought back to the waggon.

Part of the journey was through the desert where the sand was so deep that it was with difficulty the waggon was dragged along. In that desolate region, the travellers, suffering severely from thirst, separated in search of water. For a time they found nothing with which to cool their lips but bitter water-melons, and were so parched that they felt as if the blood were drying in their veins. Some of the men, however, struggled on to a river, and, after drinking freely, filled their calabashes for their companions.

But before they got back to the waggon their thirst was again such that they nearly emptied the calabashes. There was only a drop of water for Mr. Moffat, and those who were with him; and as their thirst was aggravated by the taste, they all hastened towards the river. When they reached the steep bank of the river, there was a general rush to the pool below, and some of the people, without taking off their clothes, rolled themselves into the water.

A later journey to the Griqua country was undertaken by Mr. Moffat at the request of Africaner, who wished him to inspect a district to which he thought of removing from Namaqualand. David and Simon, two brothers of Africaner, Jonker, his son, and Jantye Vanderbyle, as guide, accompanied the missionary. They had to travel along the north side of the Orange River, and were at times compelled to scramble over difficult rocks, and at other times to cross the water because of steep mountains affording no foothold for man or beast. They spent a day at the falls with a Coranna chief named Paul, who had visited the station, and having received some kindness from Mr. Moffat, gave him a hearty welcome, and was glad to hear from him once more the truths of the Gospel. The river at the falls has the appearance of a wide plain covered with mimosas. The water flows along the channel it has worn for itself between the mimosas, and then leaps wildly down the precipices to a lower level.



ATTACKED BY A LION.

Mr. Moffat was charmed by the romantic aspect of the river, and described its scenes in words which have the glow and splendour of poetry. 'The windings of the river sometimes flowed through immense chasms, overhung with stupendous precipices, and then like a translucent lake, with the beautiful towering mimosas and willows reflected from its bosom; and a rich variety of birds, of fine plumage, though without a song; wild geese, ducks, snipes, flamingoes, in perfect security, feeding on the banks, beneath the green shade, or basking in the sun's rays on the verdant islands, far from the fowler's snare. The swallows, also, mounting aloft, or skimming the surface of the mirror stream; while the ravens, with their hoarse note, might be seen seeking their daily food among the watery tribe, or cawing on the bending tops of the weeping-willows. Flocks of Guinea fowl would occasionally add to the varied scene, with their shrill cry, and whirling flight from the open plain to the umbrage of the sloping bank, where they pass the night amidst the branches of the tall acacias. But here too the curse reigns; for the kites and hawks might be seen hovering in the air, watching the motions of the creatures beneath, and ready to dart down, with the fleetness of an arrow, on a duckling straying from its parent, or on a bird or a hare moving too far from the shelter of a bush or tree. The fox also might be seen, stealing slowly along from the desert waste to slake his thirst in the refreshing stream, and

seek for some unfortunate brood which might fall within his reach; and the cobra and green serpent, ascending the trees to suck the eggs, or to devour the young birds; while the feathered tribe, uniting against the common enemy, gather around and rend the air with their screams. The African tiger, too, comes in for a share of the feathered spoil. With his sharp claws he ascends the trees in the dead of night, and seizes the Guinea fowls on their aerial roost. The hyena also here seeks his spoil, and gorges some strayed kid, or pursues the troop for the new fallen antelope or foal; and, to fill up the picture, the lion may be heard in the distance, roaring for his prey; while man, "the great enemy to man," is no less so to fish, or fowl, or spotted deer. Wherever he wanders he seeks to regale his varied appetite; and more than this, he, as the enemy of enemies, fears not to attack the ponderous elephant, face the lion's glare, and for his amusement lay prostrate in dust the innocent.'

When on his journey to the Griqua country, Mr. Moffat washed part of his clothing, and reclined on a rock until it was dry. While thus waiting, he saw a crow rise in the air with something in its talons. On calling the attention of his companions to the sight, they said, 'It is only a crow with a tortoise; you will see it fall presently.' The tortoise did fall, and the crow following it bore it upward to a still greater height, again let it fall, and again swooped down after it. Mr. Moffat and one of the men hastened to the

spot, and saw how the shell had been broken so as to enable the crow to get at the body of the tortoise. Other broken shells were about, showing that the wily crow had before adopted the same method of securing a feast.

One night the party encamped between ridges of sand, and, having but little covering, felt very cold. Mr. Moffat made a hole in the sand and buried himself, leaving only his head out. He soon felt comfortable, and one of his companions, admiring the plan, followed his example. The latter asked, 'And what are we to do if a lion comes?' 'We are safe,' was Mr. Moffat's reply, 'for he will not eat heads while he can get whole bodies.' On the journey Mr. Moffat had a wonderful escape from death by poisoning. While his companions rode forward to a Bushman village, about three hundred yards from the river, he went to a little pool which had been left by a receding flood, and took a hearty draught of the water. He thought it had a peculiar taste, and feared it had been poisoned to kill game. A Bushman from the village came running to him, and took him by the hand, as if to keep him from the pool. When he intimated by signs that he had drunk, the Bushman was speechless, and hastened to the village. He followed, and began to think the draught would be fatal, men and women looking on him with such compassion. They could not find for him the fruit he needed to act as an emetic; but after he had drunk largely of pure water, the worst symptoms abated, and in a

few days all effects of the poison had passed away.

One evening Mr. Moffat and Jantye Vanderbyl were in advance of the other travellers, and though they shouted received no reply. Shots were then fired, but instead of the voices of their friends they heard the roar of a lion which seemed close to the spot where they stood. There was nothing near with which to make a fire, and their only hope of escape from the lion was in urging their horses forward to a range of mountains in the distance. When they paused to listen, they could hear the savage beast in pursuit, and knew that at any moment he might spring upon themselves or their horses. After much labour, and parched with thirst, they passed through a defile in the mountains, and, leaving their horses to go where they pleased, resolved to make the best of their position for the night. 'We bowed the knee,' wrote Mr. Moffat, 'to Him Who had mercifully preserved us, and laid our heads on our saddles. The last sound we heard to soothe us was the distant roar of the lion; but we were too much exhausted to feel anything like fear. Sleep came to our relief, and it seemed made up of scenes the most lovely, forming a glowing contrast to our real situation. I felt as if engaged, during my short repose, in roving among ambrosial bowers of paradisiacal delight, hearing sounds of music, as if from angels' harps; it was the night wind falling on my ears from the neighbouring hill. I seemed

to pass from stream to stream, in which I bathed, and slaked my thirst at many a crystal fount, flowing from golden mountains, enriched with living green. These Elysian pleasures continued till morning dawn, when we awoke, speechless with thirst, our eyes inflamed, and our whole frames burning like a coal.'

Mr. Moffat went up the hill in search of water, while his companion looked for the horses. He found a spot where water had been, but it was as dry as the plain below. As he was descending, he happened to cough, and was immediately surrounded by nearly a hundred grinning baboons, which by their antics threatened to tear him in pieces. He parried them with his gun, but knew that if he fired and shot one of them, he would be divested of his skin in five minutes. Some of them came so near to him as to touch his hat, while he was passing the jutting rocks. But he got down to the plain in safety, and soon saw Jantye with the horses. They resumed their journey, which was over a tract of country barren as if the curse of Gilboa had fallen on it. There was no rock or tree to shadow them from the fiery beams of the sun, and at times they tried to cool their burning heads by pushing them into holes made by the ant-eater in old ant-hills.

It was late in the afternoon before they came to water, but after their horses had drunk there was only a little left for them, and that was muddy and foul. They reached Griqua Town at

night, where they were hospitably received by Mr. Anderson the missionary. After drinking coffee, Mr. Moffat was still so thirsty that he begged Mr. Anderson to let him have half a bucket of water near his bed. This request was prudently refused, but an unusually large tumbler full of water was allowed him, which he at once swallowed. He rested well through the night, and in the morning felt no worse for the privations he had suffered in the desert.

On the return journey he and his companions were pelted by hail, drenched by chilling rain, and nearly famished for want of food. The night before they arrived at their home they had to cross the river, and in doing so were charged by an infuriated hippopotamus, which made the overhanging precipices echo with its loud snortings. They were in great danger, but by a swift movement got safely out of the water.

The following is another example of the perils to which Mr. Moffat was exposed in his missionary career :

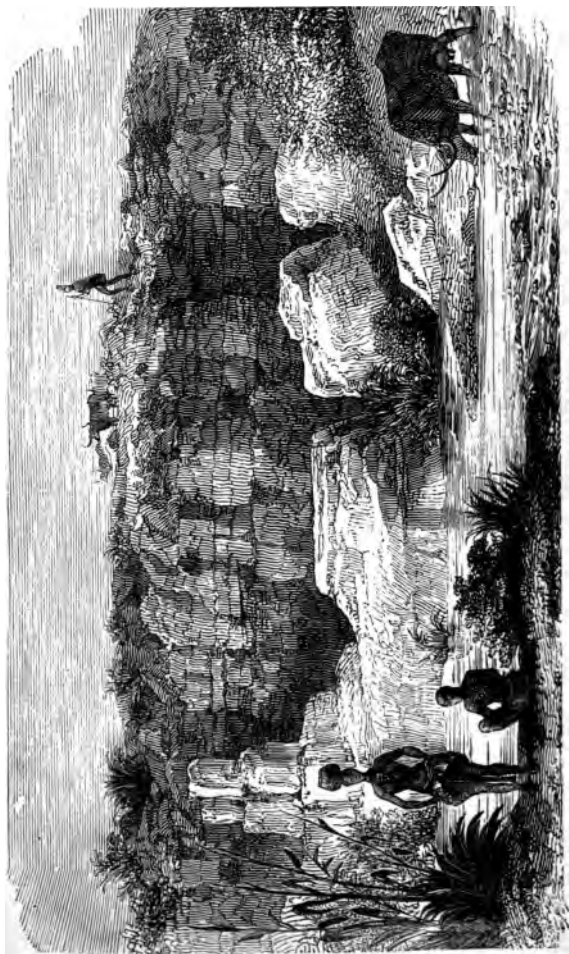
‘In one of my early journeys I had a providential escape from an African tiger and a serpent. I had left the waggons, and wandered to a distance among the coppices and grassy openings in search of game. I had a small double-barrelled gun on my shoulder, which was loaded with a ball and small shot ; an antelope passed, at which I fired, and slowly followed the course it took. After advancing a short distance, I saw a tiger-cat staring at me between the

forked branches of a tree, behind which his long spotted body was concealed, twisting and turning his tail like a cat just going to spring on its prey. This I knew was a critical moment, not having a shot of ball in my gun. I moved about as if in search of something on the grass, taking care to retreat at the same time. After getting, as I thought, a suitable distance to turn my back, I moved somewhat more quickly; but in my anxiety to escape what was behind I did not see what was before, until startled by treading on a large cobra di capello serpent, asleep on the grass. It instantly twisted its body round my leg, on which I had nothing but a thin pair of trousers, when I leaped from the spot, dragging the venomous and enraged reptile after me; and while in the act of throwing itself into a position to bite, without turning round I threw my piece over my shoulder and shot it. Taking it by the tail, I brought it to my people at the waggons, who, on examining the bags of poison, asserted that, had the creature bitten me, I could never have reached the waggons. The serpent was six feet long.'

The protecting presence of God was around the missionary, and his history confirms and illustrates the sacred words: 'Because thou hast made the Lord, Which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.'





THE KURUMAN FOUNTAIN.

CHAPTER IV.

Trialz of Missionary Life.

'I sing the men who left their home,
Amidst barbarian hordes to roam,
Who land and ocean cross'd,
Led by a loadstar, marked on high
By Faith's unseen, all-seeing eye,—
To seek and save the lost ;
Where'er the curse on Adam spread,
To call his offspring from the dead.

Strong in the great Redeemer's name,
They bore the cross, despised the shame ,
And like their Master here,
Wrestled with danger, pain, distress,
Hunger, and cold, and nakedness,
And every form of fear ;
To feel His love their only joy,
'To tell that love their sole employ.'

JAMES MONTGOMERY

AFTER three years of loneliness in Africa Mr. Moffat had the pleasure of meeting, in Cape Town, Miss Smith, to whom he was happily united in marriage. He did not return to Namaqualand, being directed to associate himself for a time with the mission in Griqua Town. But a scene of more difficult toil awaited him, and in 1821 he and his wife went to the Bechuana settlement on the Kuruman River. The London Missionary Society had been for some years wishful to establish a mission for the benefit of the Bechuanas; but the king, Mothibi, while willing to receive white men who had goods for barter, opposed the introduction of Christianity to his people. By persevering applications his resistance was overcome, and a mission was commenced at Lithako, the residence of Mothibi. His army having been defeated when on a predatory excursion, he and his people removed to the Kuruman.

Mr. Hamilton, a devoted missionary, had for some time laboured alone in the new settlement. Scarcely any success had cheered his solitude, and the only return he received for his kindness to the people was rude and dishonest behaviour. The following, given by Mr. Moffat, is an illustration of the manner in which he was treated: 'One day, having no mills at that time to grind corn, he sat down, according to ancient custom, and

with two hand-stones, as they were called, the upper being turned with a handle fixed in the top, he laboured and perspired for half a day, in order to obtain as much meal as would make a loaf sufficient to serve him for at least eight days. Having kneaded and baked his gigantic loaf, such a one as had not graced his shelf for many a month, he went to the chapel, and returned to his hut in the evening, with a keen appetite, promising himself a treat of his coarse, home-made bread, when, alas! on opening the door of his hut, and very naturally casting his eye to the shelf, he perceived the loaf was gone. Some one had forced open the only little window, which appeared too small for a human being to enter, but which served as a place of egress for thief and loaf too; and thus vanished all his hopes for bread to supper, and to many succeeding meals.'

Mr. Hamilton joyfully welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Moffat to their new sphere of labour. They were prepared to toil and suffer in the name of Christ, but at that time they knew not the magnitude of either their trials or their triumphs in the coming years. Their patience was severely tested by the selfishness and perversity of the natives. Mr. Hamilton had worked hard in digging a long ditch, in order to obtain a supply of water from the Kuruman for the mission gardens, which, being on a light, sandy soil, would grow little without irrigation. The women of the village, seeing the fertilising effects of the water, wished to procure the same advantage for themselves, and so opened the ditch

as to have a flood on their own grounds, while the missionaries had not a drop of water for domestic purposes, and were mortified by seeing their vegetables wither and die away for want of moisture. When they remonstrated, the women, forgetful of their own interests, but ready to do anything to annoy their white benefactors, broke down the dam by which the water had been diverted from the river to the ditch.

Thefts from the mission premises were frequent. Tools were taken away, and, after being completely spoiled, were impudently brought back and offered in barter for valuable articles. Cattle were let out of the fold, and driven into bogs, where only hyenas or natives could get at them; and if the missionaries bought a small flock of sheep, they were thankful if they secured half of them for their own use. Men and women crowded into Mr. Moffat's house, poisoning the atmosphere with the stench of their bodies, taking up the space which Mrs. Moffat needed for her household duties, and defiling everything they touched with their dirty hands and greasy clothing. One day a native woman was in the kitchen, and Mrs. Moffat requested her to go away, that she might close the door before leaving for public worship. The woman took the request as an insult, and laid hold of a large piece of wood to throw at Mrs. Moffat, who had consequently to hasten away, and let the intruder keep possession of the room. Stones were frequently thrown at her, and she *was* insulted in almost every possible way. At

the public services there would often be an indecorum painful to witness. Some of the people would be snoring, others laughing, and others disgustingly busy with their fingers, and sadly endangering the comfort and cleanliness of the missionary's wife, when sitting close beside her.

Mr. Moffat's feelings during this time of trial were thus expressed in one of his letters: 'I often feel at a loss what to say relative to the kingdom of Christ at this station. A sameness marks the events of each returning day. No conversions, no inquiry after God, no objections raised to exercise our powers in defence. Indifference and stupidity form the wreath on every brow; ignorance—the grossest ignorance of Divine things—forms the basis of every action; it is only things earthly, sensual, and devilish, which stimulate to activity and mirth, while the great subject of the soul's redemption appears to them like an old and ragged garment, possessing neither loveliness nor worth. O, when shall the day-star arise on their hearts? We preach, we converse, we catechise, we pray, but without the least apparent success. Only satiate their mendicant spirits by perpetually giving, and we are all that is good; but refuse to meet their demands, their praises are turned to ridicule and abuse.'

One day, being in a despondent mood, Mr. Moffat said to his wife, 'Mary, this is hard work.' 'It is hard work, my love,' she replied; 'but take courage, our lives shall be given us for a prey.' 'But think, my dear,' he said, 'how long we

have been preaching to this people, and no fruits yet appear.' The wife had her answer: 'The Gospel has not yet been preached to them *in their own tongue wherein they were born*. They have heard it only through interpreters, and interpreters who have themselves no just understanding, no real love of the truth. We must not expect the blessing till you be able, from your own lips and in their own language, to bring it through their ears into their hearts.' When relating the conversation, Mr. Moffat said, 'From that hour I gave myself with untiring diligence to the acquisition of the language.'

The difficulties of the little band of Christian pioneers were increased by a long drought, for which they were blamed and cursed. It was said that their chapel-bell frightened away the clouds; and even Mr. Moffat's black beard, and a bag of salt he had brought from Griqua Town, were imagined to have something to do with the unkindliness of the heavens.

The people, despising the teachings of the missionaries, sent ambassadors to a rain-maker who had acquired renown on the Bahurutsian mountains. In order to secure his services the ambassadors were instructed to make the most munificent promises to him, and to bring him to their town at any cost. Accordingly he was told that if he would open the clouds, and cause the rains to fall on the parched grounds, he should have riches without stint; that hills and plains would be covered with his flocks, and that his name

would be celebrated in the songs of the people. He was captivated by these offers, and agreed to accompany the ambassadors. When the people knew that he was approaching their settlement, they shouted as if in a delirium of joy. Their enthusiasm seemed to be justified; for just as the great man was descending a hill near the town clouds gathered over the heavens, lightnings flashed, thunder peals shook the earth, and there were a few heavy drops of rain. The multitude was in ecstasy, and thoroughly believed the impostor when he said that the women must plant gardens on the hills, and not in the valleys, as they would be flooded. When the excitement was in part over, a few individuals went to the mission house to taunt and ridicule the missionaries. 'Where is your God?' asked one of the unwelcome visitors. Not receiving an answer, he went on: 'Have you not seen our Morimo? Have you not beheld him cast from his arm his fiery spears, and rend the heavens? Have you not heard with your ears his voice in the clouds? You talk of Jehovah and Jesus, what can they do?' Mr. Moffat was deeply pained by the questions, but remembered the words of the psalmist: 'Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen.'

For a time the rain-maker was implicitly trusted, and chiefs and nobles listened with delight while he told how he had destroyed cities by stretching out his hand and commanding the clouds to burst upon them, and how he

had compelled a powerful army to deviate from its course by causing a river to roll across its line of march. But when after the lapse of weeks the people, still without rain, were endeavouring to support themselves on reptiles and unwholesome roots, they lost patience, and began to speak doubtfully about the rain-maker. He saw that his position was beginning to be unsafe, and, after vainly trying a number of foolish ceremonies, said that he must have a baboon free from blemish, and not lacking a single hair. This was simply to gain time, for he knew that it would be impossible to capture a baboon, and present it to him in such a condition. When a young one was caught, he saw that one of its ears was scratched, and that some hairs had been pulled from its tail. Pretending sorrow, he said: 'My heart is rent in pieces: I am dumb with grief. Did I not tell you I could not make rain if there was one hair wanting?' Another was obtained, but rejected by the deceiver as being imperfect. He had often declared that if the people would get him the heart of a lion he would bring rain in abundance. They heard one day that a lion had attacked one of their enclosures for cattle, not far from the town. The lion was killed, and the heart brought to the rain-maker, who prepared his medicines, kindled his fires, and was seen on the top of the hill alternately beckoning to the clouds with his hands or threatening them with his spear. Still there was no rain, and to turn *the anger* of the people from himself, he craftily

insinuated that the missionaries counteracted his power. But his artifice was in vain ; for though he excited prejudice against them, he could not avert the storm which was about to break on his own head. Mr. Moffat, learning that he was to be speared, boldly entered the place of assembly, in which the principal men were sitting in council, and pleaded with them to spare his life, and allow him to return to his own country. He was asked if he did not know that the rain-maker was the enemy of the missionaries, and that if he could have had his will they would all have been dead. They thought he would cease to plead for a man who had tried to bring ruin on the mission ; but he argued with them until they relented, and agreed that the rain-maker, instead of being put to death, should be banished from the settlement.

Though the rain-maker's falsehoods had been so completely exposed, there was still a bitter feeling against the missionaries, and it was resolved to drive them out of the country, if they did not speedily go away. A chief, with twelve swarthy followers, came and stood in the shadow of a large tree near the mission house. Mr. and Mrs. Moffat, the latter with a child in her arms, were at the door watching the unfriendly visitors, as they prepared for the announcement of their purpose. The chief, shaking his spear in an imposing manner, delivered the decision which had been arrived at in secret council. Mr. Moffat, having heard the black orator to the end of his speech, gave the bold reply : ' We have indeed felt

most reluctant to leave, and are now more than ever resolved to abide by our post. We pity you, for you know not what you do. We have suffered, it is true, and He Whose servants we are has directed us in His word, "When they persecute you in one city, flee you to another;" but although we have suffered, we do not consider all that has been done to us amounts to persecution; we are prepared to expect it from such as know no better. If you are resolved to rid yourselves of us, you must resort to stronger measures, for our hearts are with you. You may shed blood or burn us out. We know you will not touch our wives and children. Then shall they who sent us know, and God, Who now sees and hears what we do, shall know, that we have been persecuted indeed.'

Even Bechuana savages were touched by the brave spirit of the missionary, and they said: 'These men must have ten lives, when they are so fearless of death; there must be something in immortality.'

No further attempts were made to send away the missionaries, and Mr. Moffat had soon an opportunity of rendering services to the people, by which he won their confidence and esteem. For more than a year there had been rumours in the settlement about a woman named Mantatee, who was said to be advancing with a mighty army from the interior, conquering all before her, and leaving desolation in her track. Mr. Moffat did not give much credit to the talk, but, when on a

journey up the country, was convinced that there was truth in the story of the Mantatee army, and that his own station was in danger of being over-run by the savage hordes. He returned home, and told the people what he had heard. They were in such consternation that some of them proposed immediate flight to the Kalahari Desert. But Mr. Moffat knew that though the Mantatees would not follow them to those desolate regions, they would perish from hunger and thirst, and suggested, as a wiser plan, a request to the Griquas for help. The suggestion was agreed to, and Mr. Moffat went in his waggon to Griqua Town, where he succeeded in his purpose with the chief, Waterboer. Attempts were made to parley with the Mantatees, but they disdainfully rejected all overtures for peace, thinking that they could easily master any opposing force. A conflict being inevitable, the Griquas united with the Bechuanas, and so completely routed them that they fled from the country. The Bechuanas, abusing their victory, began to kill the women and children for the sake of their rude ornaments, or to be able to boast of the number of enemies they had slain. Mothers and the infants in their arms were as ruthlessly slaughtered as if they had been warriors contending in deadly strife. Mr. Moffat was appalled by the cruelty, and, galloping among the Bechuanas, checked the work of blood. When the women saw that their sex was spared, they ceased to fly, and sitting down exclaimed, 'I am a woman, I am a woman!'

When the Mantatee excitement had in part subsided, Mr. Moffat went to Cape Town to obtain supplies, and to give Mrs. Moffat, who was in bad health, the benefit of a change. He returned to Kuruman in May, 1824, and in the following July started on a visit to Makaba, king of the Bauangketsi. For the sake of company he travelled with Griquas who were hunting elephants. Here and there the landscape was pleasing, but much of the journey was over a country destitute of water, and at times the travellers suffered severely from thirst. When they reached their destination, Makaba gave them a hearty welcome, and insisted that the waggons should be driven into the town, though the street was so narrow that the wheels crushed down portions of the fences in front of the huts.

Mr. Moffat had several interviews with the king, and did his utmost to win his attention to the truths of the Gospel; but he was more disposed to dilate on his achievements in war than to receive religious instruction. When he was spoken to about the works of God, or the life of the Saviour, he would ask a question altogether remote from the theme which the missionary was endeavouring to impress on his mind. But on one occasion he was thoroughly aroused. It was the Sabbath, and early in the morning Mr. Moffat attempted a religious service; but the people were so noisy that he was compelled to desist. In the forenoon he went into the town, and found Makaba seated amidst his principal officers, who

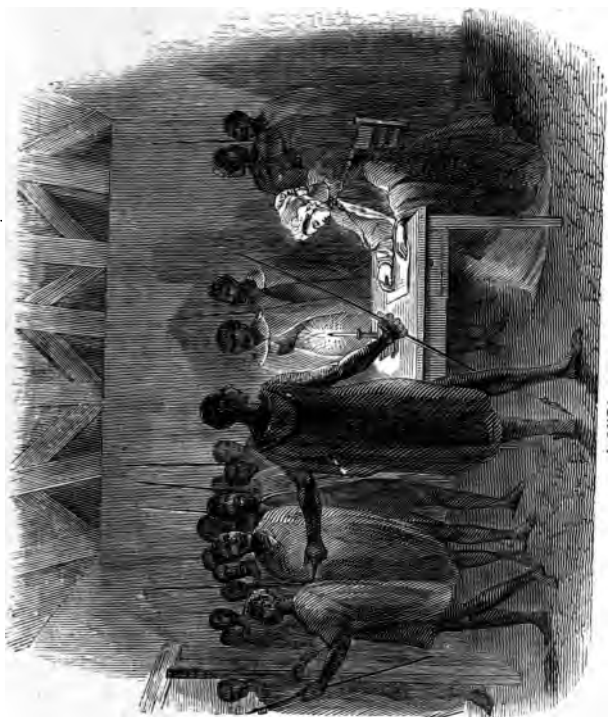
were all preparing skins for garments, or telling the news. He sat by his side, and began to speak on religious topics, to which the only response was the humming of a native air. One of his men, however, seemed struck with what was said as to the character and the miracles of Christ, and, when he heard of the dead having been raised, exclaimed, 'What an excellent doctor He must have been to make dead men live!' This led Mr. Moffat to dilate on the power which will be shown in the resurrection at the last day.

When Makaba heard of the resurrection, he was startled, and asked if his own father would rise, if the dead slain in battle would rise, and if those who had been killed by lions, tigers, hyenas, and crocodiles would rise. On being assured that they would, he turned to his people and asked, in ringing tones, 'Hark, ye wise men, whoever is among you, the wisest of past generations, did ever your ears hear such strange and unheard-of news?' Then, addressing Mr. Moffat, he said: 'Father, I love you much. Your visit and your presence have made my heart white as milk. The words of your mouth are sweet as honey, but the words of a resurrection are too great to be heard. I do not wish to hear again about the dead rising! The dead cannot rise! The dead must not rise!' 'Why,' responded Mr. Moffat, 'can so great a man refuse knowledge, and turn away from wisdom? Tell me, my friend, why I may not speak of a resurrection.' The king, raising and uncovering his arm, and shaking his hand as if

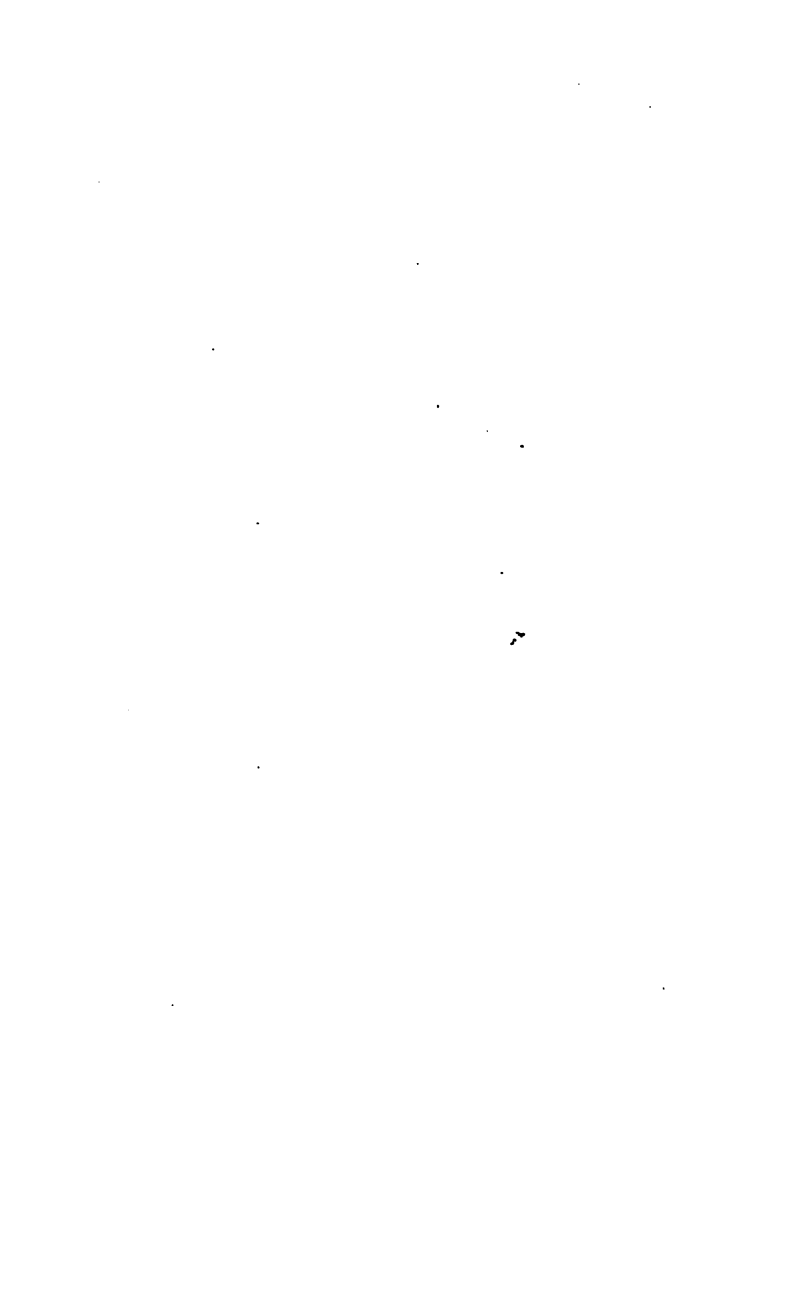
quivering a spear, said, 'I have slain my thousands, and shall they arise?' His conscience had not been troubled by the slaughter of those he had mastered in battle, but he was appalled as he thought of them starting up from their sleep in the woods and beneath the grass, and confronting him with stern, reproachful gestures.

While Mr. Moffat was on his journey, the people at Kuruman were again alarmed by the advance of the Mantatees. One evening, a Hot-tentot girl rushed to Mrs. Moffat, wringing her hands in distress, and exclaiming that the dreaded enemies were on their way to the settlement. She heard the tidings with dismay, and sent a message to Mothibi, the king, who replied that the army was approaching, but that he thought they were safe for the night. She then commended herself and her two children to the care of God, and fell asleep. At midnight she was aroused by a rap at the door, and, on asking who was there, was told that it was Mothibi. When the door was opened, he entered, followed by as many men as the house would hold, and said that the Mantatees were marching forward. The whole town was in uproar and consternation, and in the morning preparations were made for a hasty flight. Warriors drew together, and the people generally were employed in hiding or packing their most valued articles.

Messenger after messenger came with alarming news, but about noon it was ascertained that the invaders had turned aside from Kuruman in

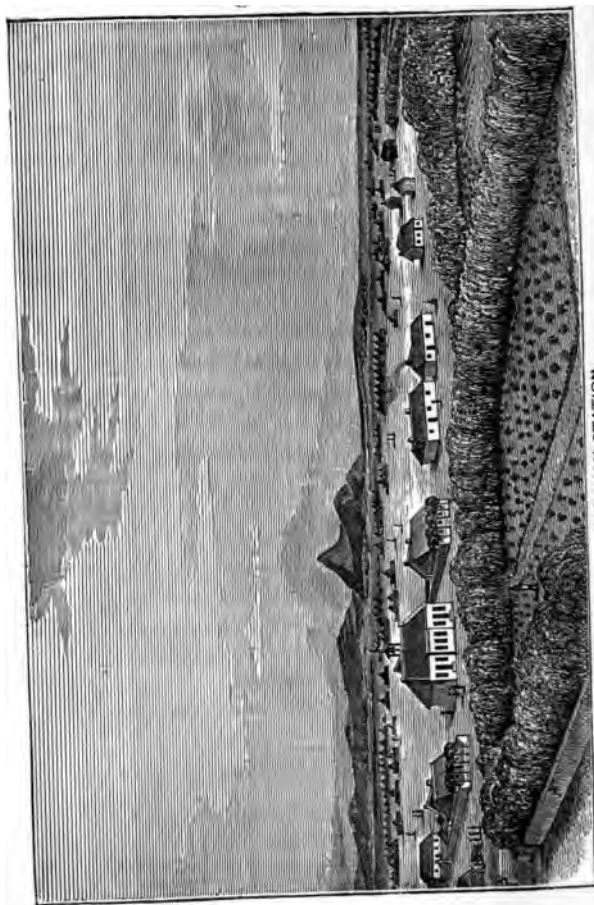


A MIDNIGHT SCENE.



the direction of the Barolongs. This intelligence gave great joy, but Mrs. Moffat was appalled by the thought that her husband, who was expected home about that time, might fall into the hands of the savages. For three weeks she was in a state of mental agony, and could only find relief at the throne of grace. During that time there were frequent reports of Mr. Moffat's death. Some persons even affirmed that they had seen parts of his clothing stained with blood. But at the end of the three weeks there was the welcome sound of the waggon wheels, and husband and wife, uniting in praise to God, were able to renew their confidence in the words, 'The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.'





KURUMAN STATION.

CHAPTER V.

Patient Labour Successful.



' Battling long with sin and error,
Traitorous friends and foemen's terror,
Truth sublime
Hath achieved its work of gladness,
Conquered grief and banished sadness,
Every clime.

Over fields of gloomy history
Hath been read the gracious mystery
Of the LIGHT;
And the doctrine of salvation,
Fully preached in every nation,
Chases night.

Souls, illumined by the Spirit,
Plead the gracious Saviour's merit,
And His name;
Those who lately homage offered
At the idol's shrine have proffered
Praise to Him.'

ANON.

THE missionaries, who had founded a new station on a better site, had still to struggle with difficulties, and were at times in danger from bands of armed robbers, who practised great cruelties on the people; devastating their fields, driving away their cattle, and even taking their lives. There was also drought so prolonged that in one year they were only favoured with a single shower. In the early part of 1826, plentiful rains refreshed the earth, but the promise of abundance was soon destroyed by swarms of locusts. The people, however, did not look on such visitations as an unmitigated evil, for the locusts were eaten by them with avidity. When a dense mass alighted on the ground, they would go with sacks, and gather them by millions. When boiled whole, and then dried, they formed a nutritious and not unpleasant diet. Mr. Moffat thus described the swarms: 'In their course, from which nothing can divert them, they appear like a dark red stream, extending often more than a mile broad; and, from their incessant hopping, the dust appears as if alive. Nothing but a broad and rapid torrent could arrest their progress, and that only by drowning them; and if one reached the opposite shore, it would keep the original direction. A small rivulet avails nothing, as they swim dexterously. A line of fire is no barrier, as they leap into it till it is extinguished,

and the others walk over the dead. Walls and houses form no impediment; they climb the very chimneys, either obliquely or straight over such obstacles, just as their instinct leads them. All other earthly powers, from the fiercest lion to a marshalled army, are nothing compared with these diminutive insects. The course they have followed is stripped of every leaf or blade of verdure. It is enough to make the inhabitants of a village turn pale to hear that they are coming in a straight line to their gardens. When a country is not extensive, and is bounded by the sea, the scourge is soon over, the winds carrying them away like clouds to the watery waste, where they alight to rise no more. Thus the immense flights which pass to the south and east rarely return, but fresh supplies are always pouring down from the north. All human endeavours to diminish their numbers would appear like attempting to drain the ocean by a pump.'

The above description strikingly illustrates Joel's prophecy of a plague of locusts: 'A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing [shall escape them. . . . They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.'

Mr. Moffat, ever wishful to widen the area of Gospel light, went, towards the end of 1826, on a mission to the Barolongs, near the Molapo River. He left home in his waggon for an absence of two or three months, having with him a driver, a little boy, and two Barolongs who had been on a visit to Kuruman. One night they halted at a pool, and let the oxen loose to drink and graze; but, seeing traces of lions, collected them and tied them to the waggon. The Barolongs had with them a young cow, which they refused to make fast, saying that she was too wise to leave the oxen and the waggon. Supper was followed by the evening hymn and prayer, and Mr. Moffat had retired to the waggon for the night, when a lion seized the cow, and was heard tearing its flesh and breaking its bones. The two Barolongs threw firebrands towards the lion, to make sufficient light for Mr. Moffat to take aim with his gun. No sooner were the firebrands thrown than the flame went out, and the savage beast was only kept from the men by a shot which startled him, and turned him aside for a moment. But he came back growling fearfully, and it was thought wise to leave him alone. The supply of wood for a fire being scanty, one of the men crept under the thorns on one side of the pool, and Mr. Moffat went on the other side, in search for fuel. The latter saw four lions on the margin of the pool, and, retreating on his hands and knees, came to his waggon-driver, who directed his attention to two other lions and a cub. They



BECHUANA MEN.

got back to the waggon as quickly as possible, and were thankful that though their fire was small, they were not attacked by any of the six lions prowling about their little encampment.

Another night, Mr. Moffat, needing meat for himself and his companions, went with two men to a fountain at which wild beasts came to drink. They waited two hours, and then heard a loud lapping at the water. It was known by the sound that lions were under the shadowy bank, and strict silence had to be kept by the men until they went away. Then two buffaloes came, and after them, in succession, two giraffes, a troop of quaggas, and a rhinoceros. One of the buffaloes and the rhinoceros were shot, and, being discovered the following day, afforded a plentiful supply of food.

Mr. Moffat found the people in the Barolong country almost impervious to Christian influence. They asked him if he were in earnest when he spoke of God; and ridiculed the redemption of man, and the hope of immortality.

Returning to Kuruman, he had still some painful experiences before seeing the effect of his labours. But at length the blessing came, and he wrote:

‘Sable cheeks bedewed with tears attracted our observation. To see females weep was nothing extraordinary; it was, according to Bechuana notions, their province, and theirs alone. Men would not weep. After having by the rite of circumcision become men, they

scorned to shed a tear. In family or national afflictions it was woman's work to weep and wail; the man's to sit in sullen silence, often brooding deeds of revenge and death. The simple Gospel now melted their flinty hearts; and eyes now wept which never before shed the tear of hallowed sorrow. Notwithstanding our earnest desires and fervent prayers, we were taken by surprise. We had so long been accustomed to indifference that we felt unprepared to look on a scene which perfectly overwhelmed our minds. Our temporary little chapel became a Bochim—a place of weeping; and the sympathy of feeling spread from heart to heart, so that even infants wept.'

The people were so eager to obtain mercy that numbers of them held meetings in their own huts, and singing and praying sounded from one end of the village to the other. Men and women who had never before known a pure joy, or an elevated thought, were able to tell of the blessedness of living union with Christ. Dark minds were enlightened; hearts which had hitherto been hard and selfish were animated by a generous love; and lips accustomed only to heathen speech became familiar with the strains of a new and holy song.

Assistance was volunteered in the erection of a school-house, which was to serve as a chapel until a more suitable one could be provided. When it was opened for worship, it was crowded, and the day was made memorable by the baptism of several inquirers, and by gracious tokens of

the presence of God. Conversion was followed by social improvement. Disgusting habits, induced by heathenism, were abandoned; the men became more industrious; the women learned to sew, and, instead of wearing greasy skins, clothed themselves in clean and decent garments; and huts, in which previously there had not been a sign of domestic comfort, were furnished with chairs and tables. As the missionaries saw the change which had been effected, they felt that they had before them an additional proof of the truth of the words: 'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.'

The foundations of a chapel were laid in 1830, but, partly owing to the difficulty in procuring timber, the building was not completed until 1839. At that date Kuruman was like an Eden in the wilderness. Lofty trees of the willow species bordered the watercourses, by which the gardens were kept in freshness and luxuriance. Beyond the gardens, and in a line with them, were the chapel, the school-houses, and the homes of the missionaries, pleasant to look upon, with their walls of dove-coloured limestone, and roofs thatched with reeds and straw. The native huts, very different from what they were before the people yielded to the influences of religion, were scattered over the landscape, which has for background a range of hills, broken at one point into a sharp and elevated peak. No wonder

that the fame of the station was carried to distant regions.

Moselekatze, the Matabele king, having heard of the wonderful work which had been done by the white men at Kuruman, sent two of his councillors to obtain information as to their mode of life, and the strange knowledge which they imparted. The councillors, kindly received by the missionaries, were amazed when they saw the houses, the enclosed gardens, the artificial channel by which water was brought from the river, the smith's forge, and the implements used in agriculture. 'You are men,' they said, 'we are but children. Moselekatze must be taught all these things.' Mrs. Moffat, seeing one of them gaze with admiration on a small mirror in the mission house, handed him a larger one. He was startled by the reflection of his own countenance in the glass, and, not having seen anything of the kind before, thought the image was that of one of his attendants on the other side; but finding there was no one at the back of the mirror, he gravely returned it to Mrs. Moffat, saying that he could not trust it. The visitors were specially interested in the public worship in the chapel. Their minds were deeply impressed by the order and solemnity of the service; and they could scarcely believe that the hymns sung with such fervour were not Bechuana war songs.

When they were about to return to their own land, it was reported that some of the tribes through which they had to pass would, if possible,



BECHUANA WOMEN.



take their lives. The report caused uneasiness to the missionaries, as Moselekatze would be sure to desolate the country in revenge for wrong done to his ambassadors. Wishful to avoid mischief, Mr. Moffat decided to accompany them over the lands held by the unfriendly tribes. Perils from wild men and wild beasts were to be apprehended, but the missionary felt assured of safety in the care of God.

One afternoon the travellers reached the Sitlagole River, which is about 160 miles from the Kuruman. They halted there, and let the oxen graze on a grassy slope not far from the waggons. Two lions rushed out of a thicket; and the oldest, which was of great size, bounded on one of the oxen, and, seizing it by the neck, killed it in a moment. The younger lion couched at a distance, while the elder stood with fore-paws on the dead beast, and roared defiance to the white man and his black friends. Guns were fired, and the lions, frightened by the unusual noise, went away, leaving the carcase for its owners.

Beyond Mosega, a native settlement on the route, Mr. Moffat had the pleasure of passing through a country presenting scenery which reminded him of the hills and dales of Scotland. There were mountains wooded to their topmost ridges; valleys adorned with evergreens; grassy plains interspersed with clumps of trees; and rivulets slipping in silvery links between banks green as emerald. Five days after leaving Mosega,

the party halted by the side of a stream, when Mr. Moffat noticed a gigantic tree at the entrance to a leafy ravine. Among the dense foliage of the tree he saw cone-like erections, and, going near, found that it was inhabited by families of Bakones. He climbed up the trunk, which was notched, and entered the highest of the huts, which, like the others, rested on a platform of sticks. The floor was covered with hay, and the furniture consisted of a spear, a spoon, and a bowl full of locusts. Mr. Moffat, being hungry, asked a woman who sat at the door if he might eat from the bowl. She readily consented, and soon brought him more locusts in a powdered state. Other women came from their huts, along the branches, to see the stranger, whose white face was to them a novel sight. The people built their houses in the tree in order to be above the reach of the lions which infested the country.

When the ambassadors were able to proceed without danger, Mr. Moffat wished to leave them and return to Kuruman, but they pleaded with him to go forward. 'Yonder,' said one of them, pointing to the blue mountains in the distance, 'dwells the great Moselekatze, and how shall we approach his presence if you are not with us? If you love us still, save us; for, when we shall have told our news, he will ask why our conduct gave you pain to cause your return; and before the sun descends on the day we see his face, we shall be ordered out for execution because you are not with us. Look at me and my companion,

and tell us, if you can, that you will not go. For we had better die here than in the sight of our people.'

Mr. Moffat, unable to resist the appeal, went on with the ambassadors. The country was still beautiful; but, amid the woodland glories and the pastoral loveliness, there were broken walls, heaps of ruins and human skulls, in which the missionary could read too plainly the story of cruelties perpetrated by the Matabele on the Bakones and Baretze, tribes which had previously been lords of the soil. The ambassadors were evidently wishful to keep him in ignorance of the sufferings caused by their countrymen; but he heard many a dark tale from a Bakone who was in their service. One Sabbath morning he was gazing on the beautiful landscape from the top of a hill, when suddenly the Bakone stood at his side, and began to give information, for which he had been asked the day before, but which he had not supplied because of the presence of his masters. Mr. Moffat, seeing from his elevated position a large area of level ground covered with ruins, questioned the Bakone as to what had become of the inhabitants. The man stretched out his arm in the direction of the ruins, and said, 'I, even I, beheld it.' He paused a moment, and then went on in a strain poetic as if he had been the Ossian of his native land:

'There lived the great chief of multitudes.
He reigned among them like a king. He was
the chief of the blue-coloured cattle. They were

numerous as the dense mist on the mountain bro
his flocks covered the plain. He thought
number of his warriors could awe his enem
His people boasted in their spears, and laugh
at the cowardice of such as had fled from th
towns. "I shall slay them, and hang up th
shields on my hill. Our race is a race of warri
Who ever subdued our fathers? They w
mighty in combat. We still possess the sp
of ancient times. Have not our dogs eaten
shields of their nobles? The vultures sh
devour the slain of our enemies." Thus th
sang, and thus they danced, till they beheld
yonder heights the approaching foe. The no
of their song was hushed in night, and th
hearts were filled with dismay. They saw
clouds ascend from the plains. It was the sm
of burning towns. The confusion of a wh
wind was in the heart of the great chief of
blue-coloured cattle. This shout was rais
"They are friends;" but they shouted aga
"They are foes," till their near approach p
claimed them Matabele. The men seized th
arms, and rushed out as if to chase the antelo
The onset was as the voice of lightning, and th
spears as the shaking of a forest in the autu
storm. The Matabele lions raised the shout
death, and flew upon their victims. It was
shout of victory. Their hissing and holl
groans told their progress among the dead.
few moments laid hundreds on the ground. T
clash of shields was the signal of triumph. C

people fled with their cattle to the top of yonder mount. The Matabele entered the town with the roar of the lion; they pillaged and fired the houses; speared the mothers, and cast their infants to the flames. The sun went down. The victors emerged from the smoking plain, and pursued their course, surrounding the base of yonder hill. They slaughtered cattle; they danced and sang till the dawn of day; they ascended and killed till their hands were weary of the spear.'

Moselekatze gave Mr. Moffat a hospitable reception, and at an early interview thus expressed his gratitude for the kindness shown to his ambassadors: 'Machobane, I call you such because you have been my father. You have made my heart as white as milk; milk is not white to-day, my heart is white. I cease not to wonder at the love of a stranger. You never saw me before, but you love me more than my own people. You fed me when I was hungry; you clothed me when I was naked; you carried me in your bosom;' and, raising the right arm of the missionary, he added, 'That arm shielded me from my enemies.' When Mr. Moffat replied that he was not conscious of having rendered such services, the monarch pointed to his ambassadors, and said, 'These are great men. When I sent them from my presence to see the land of the white men, I sent my ears, my eyes, my mouth; what they heard, I heard; what they saw, I saw; and what they said, it was Moselekatze who said it. You

fed them, and clothed them ; and when they were to be slain, you were their shield. You did it unto me. You did it unto Moselekatze, the son of Machobane.' The king was addicted to war, and Mr. Moffat did his best to show him the evil of his cruel deeds, and to impress him with a sense of his responsibility to God for the use of his power. When Mr. Moffat left, he rode with him a day's journey in his waggon, and parted from him with every token of friendly feeling.

The missionary was thankful to get back to his home, and to the work at Kuruman, which was still in a prosperous condition. He felt that a native literature was needed, and printed catechisms, spelling-books and hymn-books in Sechuana, the language of the Bechuanas. But his literary labours were more especially directed to the translation of Holy Scripture into the tongue of the people. As early as 1830, he had Luke's Gospel in readiness for the press. He took it to the Cape to be printed, but had to set up most of the type with his own hands.

Being successful in his first effort, he produced a Sechuana version of the whole of the New Testament. This he brought to England, where it was printed under the auspices of the British and Foreign Bible Society. He attended the annual meeting of the society in Exeter Hall, and gave a long, highly encouraging speech. In illustration of the value which was placed on such a fragment of Holy Scripture as Luke's Gospel, he related the following anecdote. Going

one day with medicine for a sick infant, he found the mother weeping. 'What aileth thee, my child?' he asked. 'Is thy babe still unwell?' 'No, not that,' she replied; 'but my mother, my mother!' 'Which of the two,' was the question, 'thy mother, or thy mother-in-law?' 'My own mother,' she answered; 'she who bore me;' adding, as she held out her copy of Luke's Gospel in a hand wet with tears, 'My mother will never see this word; she will never hear this good news.' She wept again and again, as she thought of her relatives in the interior of the country, from which she had been brought, and said, 'O, my mother and my friends, they live in heathen darkness; and shall they die without seeing the light which has shone on me, and without tasting that love which I have tasted?'

It was a great joy to Mr. Moffat, after an absence of twenty years from his native land, to find his parents still living. We can imagine the welcome which the aged man and woman gave their dear Robert; and how they sat, long after their usual hour for sleep, listening to his stories about the African deserts and Namaqualand and Kuruman. And how thankful he must have been, as he looked on his mother's face, that he had kept the promise made to her when he was on his way to Cheshire, and had read the Bible every day!

While in England, he published his graphic work, *Missionary Labours and Scenes in South Africa*. This work has more than the charm of

a romance, bringing before the reader in vivid words narratives of strange adventure, terrible trials, and triumphs in which angels have rejoiced. The writer was richly gifted with imaginative powers, and could steep his thoughts and facts in the brightest colours of poetry; but, with the exception of hymns for the Bechuanas, he did not often attempt metrical composition. He, however, gratified a lady by writing the following lines in her album :

' Mine album is the savage breast,
Where darkness broods and tempests rest
Without one ray of light :
To write the name of Jesus there,
And point to worlds all bright and fair,
And see the savage bow in prayer,
Is my supreme delight.'

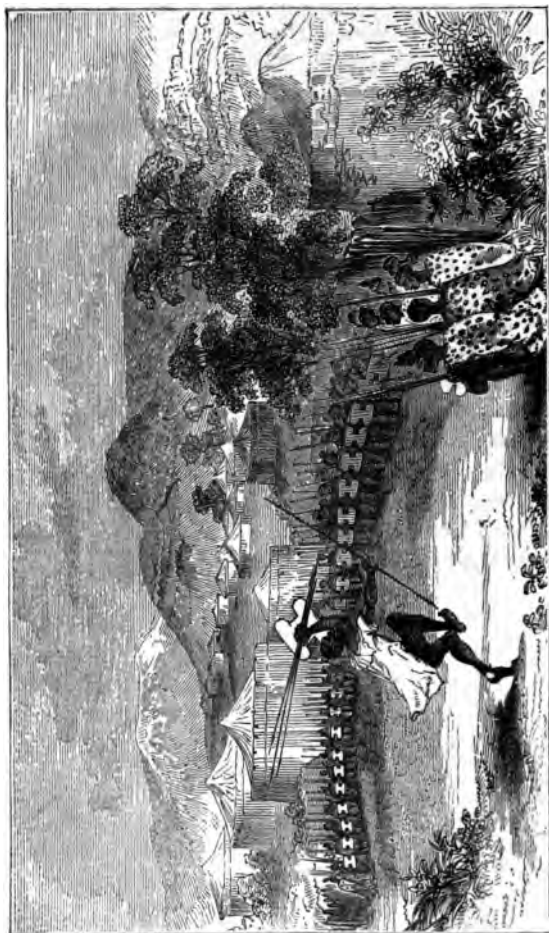
The verse below, suggested by the missionary's beautiful lines, was written after his death :

' Thine "album is the savage breast ;"
And Afric's swarthy sons attest
The fragrance of thy name ;
For thou hast scattered love and light,
And led in paths of truth and right
A people found in nature's night,
And won immortal fame.'

Before returning to Africa, Mr. Moffat gave a farewell address to a large congregation of Sabbath scholars. In that address he remarked : ' O, my young children, I have said we may never again see each other, if you do not come out to Africa. I may come back, that is a possibility, I cannot tell ; it is not very likely ; but there may be here a Morrison—there may be here a Williams

—there may be here a Carey—there may be here a Milne—there may be here a Coke—there may be here a Wesley—there may be here a Whitefield—there may be here a John Knox for aught I know, for the world requires reformers yet. O, the field is great; there is a call for missionaries, and for missionary effort. Let me hope that many here, boys and girls, will become men and women—missionaries and missionaries' wives, to go out perhaps to Africa. You may come there and cast your eyes perhaps on a mound of stones that covers the remains of Robert Moffat, who is now addressing you. You will remember his words—you will remember his last entreaty, his last wish—read your Bibles, read your Bibles.'

. The voice which spake thus pleasantly to the children is now silent, but boys and girls will do well to keep in mind the kindly exhortation, 'Read your Bibles, read your Bibles.'



THE BECHUANA PARLIAMENT.

CHAPTER VI.

Still in the Service.

'Set apart for Jesus !
Is not this enough,
Though the desert prospect
Open wild and rough ?
Set apart for His delight,
Chosen for His holy pleasure,
Sealed to be His special treasure !
Could we choose a nobler joy ? and would
we if we might ?

Set apart to serve Him,
Ministers of light,
Standing in His presence,
Ready day or night !
Chosen for His service blest,
He would have us always willing
Like the angel-hosts, fulfilling
Swiftly and rejoicingly each recognised behest.

Set apart for ever
For Himself alone !
Now we see our calling
Gloriously shown !
Owning, with no secret dread,
"This our holy separation,
Now the crown of consecration
Of the Lord our God shall rest upon our
willing head !"

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

MR. MOFFAT returned to Africa in 1840, taking with him a little band of missionaries, one of whom was David Livingstone. The Rev. Thornley Smith has given an interesting reminiscence of his proceedings in Graham's Town, before he went forward to Kuruman :

‘ On the day of his arrival, which was on a Monday, a Missionary Meeting was held in the new Congregational chapel, in which I had the honour to take part : and Mr. Moffat, who was scarcely expected, appeared on the platform. What a meeting that was ! and what a speech he gave us ! In the course of it he stated that during his visit home he had addressed, in several places, large numbers of children ; and when the meeting closed, I asked him if he would, some evening in the week, give an address to the children of the Sunday schools in Graham's Town. “ Well,” he said, “ I leave for the interior on Friday. How will you let the children know ? and where shall the gathering be ? ” I replied, “ The Wesleyan chapel is the largest in the town, if you will accept that, and we will do the best we can to secure a large attendance.” Mr. Moffat at once consented, and Wednesday evening was fixed for the service. Mr. Shaw was not at home, but I consulted with other ministers and friends ; and *we sent* the bellman through the town inviting all

the English children to come and hear the great missionary. The chapel was filled. The children occupied the body of it, and their friends the gallery. Never can I forget that service. For an hour and a half Mr. Moffat spoke to those children of his work in the interior of the country, and kept their attention to the last moment. It was a thrilling story ; and produced an effect on both young and old of the most delightful kind.'

Mr. Moffat had no thought of claiming the whole of Africa for the Missionary Society which he represented. He saw that the field was too vast to be covered by the agencies of any one section of the Church, and heartily rejoiced in the success of Wesleyan missions in Natal, Kaffraria, and other parts of Africa. The moral and spiritual victories won by Wesleyan missionaries on such stations as Somerset, Heald Town, and Lessey Town, were associated by him with his own achievements at Kuruman ; and had he thought of posthumous honour, he would not have wished any higher distinction for his name than for it to take rank with names like those of Barnabas Shaw and William Shaw.

Leaving Graham's Town, cheered by the good wishes of Wesleyan and other ministers, he travelled on to Kuruman, where he was received with enthusiasm by his flock.

'For many successive weeks,' he wrote, 'the station continued to be a scene of bustle ; the great influx of strangers and believers from the different

out-stations made us feel something like what we did among the excitements of England. At one time there were not fewer than twenty waggons belonging to the Bechuanas, which had arrived laden with visitors, including almost every member of the Batlapi royal family, besides several subordinate chiefs. Mothibi, the old king, stooping with age, came with his wife, Mahuto, on whose brow the evening shades of life were fast spreading, both members of Christ's mystical body, a brother and sister beloved. Here they were met by their children from Lehatlong, who had come with a company from that place, including the native teacher, Gasibonoe. Mothibi's son and regent, from Borigelong, and also his uncle, Mahura, the influential chief at Taung, with their respective trains of followers, came to bid us welcome. The most perfect harmony prevailed. We had the communion of the Lord's Supper with about 400 persons.'

One great task which Mr. Moffat undertook, when again settled in Kuruman, was the translation of the Old Testament into Sechuana, to which he was urged by Livingstone. The work was hard and protracted, years elapsing before it was completed. When the Book of Jeremiah was in the press, and other books were nearly ready, the translator wrote to a friend: 'A couple of months will finish Ezekiel; a load will then be removed from my mind, a load with respect to which I have often felt as if it would crush me; yet have as often felt as though my

very existence depended upon the prosecution of this work. I have felt, in short, as if I must die if I dropped it; or, at least, be miserable to the end of my days, did I not enlist all the time, research, and perseverance at my command in its accomplishment. In fine, I have felt it to be an awful work to translate the Book of God; and, perhaps, this has given to my heart the habit of sometimes beating like the strokes of a hammer. After getting the brain refreshed, I shall hasten to a revision of the New Testament, a comparatively easy work.'

The last sheet was at length written, and Mr. Moffat thus described his sensations: 'I could hardly believe that I was in the world, so difficult was it for me to realise the fact that my work of so many years was completed. Whether it was from weakness or overstrained mental exertion, I cannot tell; but a feeling came over me as if I should die, and I felt perfectly resigned. To overcome this I went back again to my manuscript, still to be printed, read it over and re-examined it, till at length I got back again to my right mind. This was the most remarkable time in my life, a period which I shall never forget. My feelings found vent by my falling upon my knees and thanking God for His grace and goodness in giving me strength to accomplish my task.'

Livingstone's visit to England in 1856 excited great enthusiasm for African missions, and the London Missionary Society resolved to establish

stations among the Makololo and the Matabele. In accordance with this resolution Mr. Moffat set out on a journey to Moselekatze, to induce him to accept missionaries for his people. When the king heard the reason of Mr. Moffat's visit, he said, 'You must come too. How shall I get on with people I do not know, if you are not with me? By all means,' he added, 'bring teachers; you are wise, you are able to judge what is good for me and my people better than I do. The land is yours, you must do for it what you think is good.' Mr. Moffat told him that all that was required was a site for a station, where there was water, and a population for the teachers to instruct. The latter would not look to him for food, but plant and sow, or purchase what they needed. Mr. Moffat was also careful to inform him that the teachers would not act for him as traders, but that he must get his supplies from those whose calling was to trade with the natives.

While on his visit to the king, Mr. Moffat interceded effectually on behalf of Macheng, the young chief of the Bamangwatos, who was held as a captive. Macheng was but a boy when his father was killed, and was committed to the care of Sechele, a Bechuana chief. In the absence of Sechele from his town the Matabele attacked it, and took many inhabitants away, among whom were Macheng and his eldest sister. The latter escaped, but the former, at the time of Mr. Moffat's interposition, had been sixteen years in

captivity. After a long conversation between the king and the missionary, Macheng was called. Moselekatze in a humorous tone thus accosted him: 'Macheng, man of Moffat, go with your father. We have arranged respecting you. Moffat will take you back to Sechele. That is my wish, as well as his, that you should be in the first instance restored to the chief from whom you were taken in war. When captured, you were a child; I have reared you to be a man.' The attendants of the king were loud in praise of his magnanimity, and as Mr. Moffat led the young chief to the waggon, they shouted, 'There goes Macheng; Moffat is taking Macheng to his people!'

When Mr. Moffat, with Macheng in charge, reached Sechele's town, he was conducted by the chiefs of the tribe to a large hollow, like an amphitheatre, in which were ten thousand people arrayed in the trappings of war. Sechele ordered all to be silent, and then speaker after speaker expressed satisfaction at the restoration of Macheng to his early home. 'Ye tribes, ye children of the ancients,' said one orator, 'this day is a day of marvel. That which awakes my heart to wonder is to see the Spirit's work. My thoughts within me begin to move. Verily, the things I have seen, and the words I have heard, assume stability. When I first heard the word of God, I began to ask, "Are these things true?" Now the confusion of my thoughts and of my soul is unravelled. Now I begin to perceive that those who preach are verily true. If Moffat were

not of God, he would not have espoused the cause of Sechele, in receiving his words, and delivering Macheng from the dwelling-place of the beasts of prey, to which we Bechuanas dared not approach. There are who contend that there is nothing in religion. Let such to-day throw away their unbelief. If Moffat were not such a man, he would not have done what he has done, in bringing him who was lost—him who was dead—from the strong bondage of the mighty. Moselekatze is a lion; he conquered nations, he robbed the strong ones, he bereaved mothers—he took away the son of Khari. We talk of love. What is love? We hear of the love of God. Is it not through the love of God that Macheng is among us to-day? A stranger, one of a nation—who of you knows its distance from us?—he makes himself one of us, enters the lion's abode, and brings out to us our own blood.'

When the speaker sat down, one of the Matabele who had charge of Macheng through the years of his captivity, gave a pathetic address, in which he said, 'Ye tribes, why did ye covet my child? Why did you, Moffat, prevail with the son of Machobane to make me childless? I shall return to the desert and weep. He is gone from me, but I shall never forget that I am the father of the son of Khari, who is now the son of Moffat.'

In 1859 Mr. Moffat received the missionaries who had been sent out to labour among the Makololo and the Matabele. The party divided at Kuruman, one division going to the Makololo

on the north of the Zambesi. The story of that mission is one of suffering and sorrow. Sekeletu, the ruler of the tribe, compelled the missionaries and their wives to settle in a swampy, unhealthy district. As a consequence many of them were stricken by fever, and most of them died.

Mr. Moffat conducted the missionaries for the Matabele to their destination. Moselekatze was highly pleased when he knew that the man whom he called his father was again entering his dominions, and, on account of an epidemic among the Kuruman oxen, sent a detachment of warriors to draw the waggons to his town. The new mission was vigorously prosecuted, and was successful in its evangelistic operations. Mr. Moffat's son John was for a time employed in it, but in 1866 was removed to Kuruman. Describing the work on that station, he wrote :

‘ The public services are, a prayer-meeting at sunrise on Sunday ; preaching in Sechuana, morning, afternoon, and evening ; with the Sunday-school twice, and a juvenile afternoon service. The early prayer-meeting is left entirely to the natives ; the three preaching services to the missionaries ; and the Sunday-school, with the juvenile service, to my sister. There are also a Wednesday evening service, a monthly missionary prayer-meeting, a Church meeting, and a prayer-meeting on Thursday afternoon. This last is in the hands of the natives. No native takes any part in the preaching on the station, except in extreme cases, when it is regarded as a make-

shift. My father and I share the preaching between us. Occasionally one of us rides to two villages to the north-west, holding service at each. My custom at home is to give New Testament reading in the morning, a topical sermon in the afternoon, and Old Testament exposition in the evening. On Monday evening I have a young men's Bible class, to me the most interesting work, especially as I have much encouragement in it. There is a marked advance on the part of my pupils. For a people so stolid and undemonstrative as the Bechuanas I have great encouragement, and hope my work will not be in vain. On the Monday evening, also, my sister and I hold a practising class to improve the singing. On Tuesday evening I meet male inquirers; on Wednesday, before the service, I have a Bible class for women; on Thursday we have our English prayer-meeting, and on Friday evening I meet female inquirers. I need but mention the school conducted by my sister with three native assistants.'

In the beginning of 1870 the veteran missionary and his wife were so broken in health that they were almost compelled to leave their charge, and return to England. It was with deep sorrow they bade farewell to the people for whose well-being they had so long prayed and laboured, and looked for the last time on the gardens and cottages of their beloved Kuruman. The parting was the more painful because they had no hope of again clasping the dark hands of their African brethren and sisters, or of uniting with them in



PREACHING AT A VILLAGE.

the glad solemnities of their Sabbath services. But their grief was not without mitigation; for through their tears they saw, in beautiful vision, themselves and their converts keeping perpetual jubilee in the presence of God.

They were two months in travelling from Kuruman to Port Elizabeth, where they received a kind welcome from missionaries and other friends. Mr. Moffat, addressing the company assembled to do honour to himself and his wife, said: 'I had hoped that I should be excused as to making a speech, as I am suffering from a cold; but I find it quite impossible to remain silent. I should be a mussel or a cockle, or something of that kind, not to feel impressed by what has been said. I have been reminded of past events, past hours, past days, past years. I have been carried back to past scenes I can never forget. I still remember distinctly, when I first became a missionary, the great undertaking it seemed to be to learn the language of the people among whom I was placed. There were no interpreters to teach us a single word, and the greatest difficulties were thrown in the missionary's way. However, I laboured on, gathering a few words at a time from one and another, until I could string sentences together, and make my wishes known to the natives. I could make you laugh, as I laughed when I discovered them, at jokes perpetrated towards us by the natives, and amusing things that occurred to us during our inquiries. But I laboured on. During all this time we had not a

friend in the whole nation, not an individual that loved or respected us, or who wished us to remain among them; and, although they tried to drive us out, we persevered, and, by God's grace and assistance, overcame every difficulty.'

Proceeding with his address, Mr. Moffat said: 'Christianity has already accomplished much. When first I went to the Kuruman, scarcely an individual could go beyond. Now they travel in safety as far as the Zambesi. Then we were strangers, and they could not understand us. We were treated with indignity, as the outcasts of society, who, driven from among our own race, took refuge with them. But, bearing in remembrance what our Saviour underwent, we persevered, and much success has rewarded our efforts. Now it is safe to traverse any part of the country, and traders travel far beyond Kuruman without fear of molestation. Formerly, men of one native tribe could not travel through another's territory, and wars were frequent. Where one station was scarcely tolerated, there are several. The Moravians have their missionaries; the Berlin Society theirs. Others, too, are occupied in the good work, besides many native Gospel teachers. Very prosperous is our advanced station at the Matabele, who, I quite expect, will one day become a great nation. They sternly obey their own laws; and I have noticed, that, when men of fixed principles become convinced of the truth of Christianity, they hold firmly to the faith, and are not lightly shaken.'

CHAPTER VII.

Peace and Rest.



'Behold the western evening light !
It melts in deepening gloom ;
So calmly Christians sink away,
Descending to the tomb

The winds breathe low ; the withering leaf
Scarce whispers from the tree ;
So gently flows the parting breath,
When good men cease to be.

How beautiful on all the hills
The crimson light is shed !
'Tis like the peace the Christian gives
To mourners round his bed.

How mildly on the wandering cloud
The sunset beam is cast !
'Tis like the memory left behind,
When loved ones breathe their last.'

PEABODY.

MR. AND MRS. MOFFAT arrived in England on July 25th, 1870. Members of all evangelical Churches hailed with kindly interest the return of the missionary who had won so many trophies for Christ in Africa, but the Congregationalists were properly foremost in their demonstrations. A company, consisting of nearly one hundred directors and friends of the London Missionary Society, met in the Board-room of their Mission House, Blomfield Street, to receive the venerable 'patriarch of Kuruman.' On being introduced to the assembly by the eloquent Dr. Mullens, Mr. Moffat said :

'Fathers and brethren, I have been listening with great attention, and occasionally with very deep feeling, to the words which have been spoken, and which have deeply impressed me. I have felt their weight; but, alas! it is not for me on the present occasion to meet the expectations of some with regard to saying a word or two for myself. I am unpleasantly situated. The night before last I had scarcely any sleep, and last night I had none; and, at the present time, I feel my head "like an empty calabash," as we say in Africa. It is not very seasonable to give anything like an address; but a few words I will speak—I cannot help speaking. It was not my expectation to be here; it was not my intention again to visit *England*. When I last left the Board of Directors,

it was, in thought, for ever. Never did it enter my mind that I should set my feet on English soil again. But it has been ordered otherwise. Even on the first occasion when I came home, it was not a matter of choice. When I went out, I went out for life. When I gave myself to the missionary enterprise, it was to live and die in the service. I always anticipated I should leave my dust to mingle with those whom I have been instrumental in gathering from among the heathen, and who are now participating in the glories of the heavenly world.'

In the course of his address, Mr. Moffat mentioned the names of directors of the Society who had passed into eternity since his previous visit. 'These are all gone; it is depressing to think of it; we are following, and others will follow. But, say they are gone, O brethren, the work for which God became man—a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, the first Missionary in the world—what a glorious work in which to be found, whether in life or in death! How it is to go with me, I know not. I shall do all that in me lies for the advancement of the missionary cause. I shall not fail, wherever I am, to use all the means within my power, by presence and word, to advance that great cause to which I have devoted my life. It would have been pleasant just to remain with the people among whom I laboured so long, by whom I am beloved, and whom I love. O, that parting was a scene hard to witness without deep emotion.

Not only from Christian converts, but from heathen chiefs did I receive tokens of goodwill. Their amanuenses brought letters deploring my departure, and presents to induce me not to quit the country, but to remain, promising to give me so much more if I would but remain. It was gratifying to see these tokens, especially from the heathen, and those able to appreciate one's labours among them. One sent an ox, another a caross, and so on; a lady of quality sent me four feathers. Some of them asked how they were to live, how they were to exist, if I went out of the country; that is a form of expression among them. It is consolatory to think that the influence of the Gospel in that dark, benighted country is spreading, and is going into the interior, covering hamlet after hamlet, until its advance, let us be assured, will cover the whole land. It is for us to pray and to labour, and we have the assurance that Ethiopia shall yet stretch out her hands unto God. I feel exceedingly grateful to my friends for the kind way in which I have been received; and in my secret hours I will return thanks to God for all these tokens of friendship of which I have been the recipient this day.'

Mr. Moffat was fully entitled to the honours bestowed on him by the directorate of his own Society, and by Christians of every name in the land. He had spent more than fifty years in Africa, and had been in perils from savage men and savage beasts; he had known weary wanderings in the desert, when his tongue was so parched with thirst as to

be almost deprived of the power of speech; he had visited and conciliated kings whose halls were hung with trophies of cruel war; he had confronted and overcome difficulties in the spirit of a loftier heroism than that which moved his ancestors on the field of Bannockburn; he had elevated a barbarous dialect by throwing into it the music of Holy Writ; and had witnessed transformations of character and social life more wonderful than poetry has ever imagined. Looking back from the height of his numerous years on scenes of protracted toil and sublime achievement; retaining even in an enfeebled body the missionary ardour which in the beginning of his course impelled him to dangers and hardships amid the sterilities of Namaqualand; and seeing Africaner, and a crowd of glorified converts from Kuruman, waiting to welcome him to the jewelled city which is now their blest abode; he was eminently worthy of the golden phrase which, in happy parody of Milton, the Rev. William Arthur applied to him on a great public occasion, 'That old man magnificent!'

A great sorrow befell Mr. Moffat, in the death of his devoted wife, on Tuesday, January 10th, 1871. She was buried the following Saturday in the Norwood Cemetery. In keeping with the brightness and purity of her life, the sun shone down from a blue sky on the funeral procession as it passed to the chapel, and thence to the grave. The two daughters and a grand-daughter of the departed saint having nearly covered the coffin

with white flowers, it was solemnly lowered into the dust. The Rev. E. Mannering, who conducted the funeral service, thus referred to her union with the missionary: 'Their English loneliness on Afric's soil was indeed social exclusion, but they bore it meekly; and then it was those two precious souls became so thoroughly one in thought, feeling, purpose and aim. The wife was as essential to the husband's usefulness as the husband was to the wife's safety. Shortly after her return to England, a Christian friend said to her, "God has honoured you to be a great helper to your husband." "Yes," she replied, "I always studied my husband's comfort, never hindered him in his work, but always did what I could to keep him up to it." The departure of such a loved companion might well convey to the bereaved husband the idea that he was alone. But that was not so in an absolute sense; for the Lord is with him, and a multitude of all sections of the universal Church are with him in sympathy, and in the desire that his life may be spared to complete the revised edition of the Holy Scriptures, in which the departed took such a lively interest; so that the people whom she had left might have in their possession those Scriptures which are able to make them wise unto salvation. The natural shrewdness, cheerfulness, and especially the simplicity of our departed friend, all served, as sanctified by the Spirit, to give point to her religious life and Christian character. Shortly before her death, she declared that she



MRS. MOFFAT.

never had a doubt about her safety in Christ from the time she was converted. She knew and felt she was a sinner, and she went to Christ direct. Thus retaining the peace she had, every year she became more and more established in faith. This thought was to the surviving husband a precious legacy, much more precious than gold—the conviction that she is now before the throne of God and the Lamb.’

In 1872 the university of Edinburgh, always ready to recognise eminent services in the cause of Christ, conferred on Mr. Moffat the degree of Doctor of Divinity. The honour was worthily bestowed, for, though he had not produced any great theological treatise to be a guide and an illumination to the minds of youthful students, and had not given from the pulpit sublime and beautiful sermons, influencing the thought of the age, he had presented to Africa the word of God in one of its own tongues, and had the seals of an effectual ministry in many a Bechuana arrayed in the graces of spiritual religion. The year following he received a more practical demonstration of esteem in a subscription amounting to £5800. When he began his missionary work, his yearly stipend was only £25, and it never rose to more than a pittance barely sufficient for the needs of his family. He, however, had been content with food and raiment, and had never thought of enlarging his resources by sinking the missionary in the merchant, and using his influence with the natives for trade in African commodities.

When he came back to England, he was comparatively poor; and it was justly felt that it would be a disgrace to the Christian people of the country to allow him to be subjected to privation in his old age. Hence an effort was made to raise a sum that would enable him to live in the comfort to which, after his devoted toil, he had so good a claim. The effort was successful, and those who aided in the success must have felt themselves amply repaid by knowing that one of the grandest old men of the time would be free from the pressure of temporal care, and have the assurance that his labours were duly appreciated.

In 1874 Dr. Moffat attended the funeral of Dr. Livingstone in Westminster Abbey. The two missionaries had long been associated in relationship, and in zealous activities for Africa. Livingstone was at Kuruman in the beginning of his African career, and had before him an exemplification of the large and blessed effects of patient, persevering labour, in the mission premises, the gardens, the vineyards, and the evangelised people. Mary Moffat, the missionary's daughter, was to him a lovely apparition; and, standing with her, one memorable hour, beneath the boughs of a fruit-tree, he asked and obtained her promise that she would become his wife. He was married to her when he had been about four years in Africa. Like her father and mother she had a missionary heart, and was a true help-meet to her brave, adventurous husband. After noble service in the name of Christ, she died one

Sabbath evening at Shapungu, on the Zambesi, and was buried in the shadow of a baobab tree.

Livingstone continued his exploring work to the close of his lonely yet sublime life at Ilala in the heart of Africa. His body was carried to Zanzibar by his followers, and brought to England. The common feeling was that a grave in the Westminster Abbey was due to the man whose footprints were a path of light over the breadth of the African continent, and who had so grandly combined the spirit of Christian philanthropy with his achievements in geographical research. Dr. Moffat was one of the company of mourners, and what visions must have passed before him, while the organ was rolling its plaintive notes along the arched roof!—the bright girlhood of the dear daughter whose grave was canopied by an African sky; the early efforts of Livingstone in the mission field; his long journeys with the Makololo; his adventures on rivers and lakes; and the last scene at Ilala. It is wonderful how some lives develop into unanticipated glories. The man whose coffin was borne in solemn state along the aisles of the sanctuary appropriated to the greatest names in English story was originally a weaver at Blantyre. The man whose presence was most noted in the distinguished throng at the funeral was originally a gardener at Inverkeithing.

On St. Andrew's Day, 1875, Dr. Moffat, at the request of Dean Stanley, lectured on African

missions in Westminster Abbey. It was a grand position for the aged Nonconformist; but no dignitary of the Church of England could more worthily have spoken of the aggressive movements of Christianity within those venerable walls. If the saints of olden time, sepulchred in the hallowed dust beneath the pavement, could have risen from their long sleep, they, with larger charity than they knew while living, would have hailed him as a true successor of the apostles. Even the poets whose tombs adorn and enrich that ancient shrine, if they could have gathered round him in their garlands and singing robes, would have owned that his achievements surpassed all the ideal glories of their most magnificent poems. He was too simply great to be unduly elated by the honour which the generous dean had accorded to him; but he could scarcely fail to note the contrast to the rude scenes of African deserts presented by the stately masonry, the pictured windows, the memorials of illustrious names, amid which he stood, while expatiating on the work so dear to his heart.

The service in the Abbey was thus noticed in the *Times*: 'For a man to have surrendered himself so completely to the interests of the people whom he desired to evangelise, that he has at length to apologise to an assembly of his own countrymen, as Dr. Moffat did, for having ceased to think in his native tongue, is a rare exhibition of the true missionary spirit. It will certainly be one of the most memorable incidents to be re-

counted by some future Dean Stanley, when supplementing the already recorded history of Westminster Abbey, that Dr. Moffat, speaking near the grave of Dr. Livingstone, should have described within its walls the principles on which he and his illustrious follower laid the first real foundation of South African Christianity. Such an occasion was, no doubt, one to fire with an unusual expansiveness the liberal enthusiasm of the dean of Westminster, and it would indeed have been impossible for him to say too much on behalf of the claims upon our honour and gratitude asserted by the missionary energy of other Christian communities besides the Church of England.'

Dr. Moffat attended the general conference on Foreign Missions held in London, October, 1878. In his speech he said : ' We have a bright prospect in reference to the whole interior of Southern Africa. I expect by-and-by to hear that the boundaries of the colony will be extended to the Kuruman, and ere long the young people of to-day will see those boundaries extending to the Zambesi. And so it will go on, until from South Africa we meet those missionaries who are now entering the east coast and are making their way to the shores of the great lakes.'

Sir William M'Arthur was Lord Mayor of London in 1881. His generous enthusiasm for mission work, and his catholic spirit, were well known throughout the religious world ; and it was in keeping with those characteristics that he

invited Dr. Moffat, in the May of that year, to a grand banquet in the Mansion House. Archbishop Tait, with other prelates and dignitaries of the Church of England, and many representatives of the Nonconformist bodies, were present to honour the apostle of the Bechuanas. Speeches were delivered in testimony of esteem for his character, and admiration of the labours in which he had employed his powers for so many years. The gathering was significant, not only as showing how a true man by simple perseverance in duty can attain, without seeking it, a distinction of which a prince might be proud, but also as evidencing a large interest in Christian missions, and a Christian charity which overlooks denominational peculiarities, and is thankful for any evangelical agency that can charm the heathen from their follies by visions of the pure and noble life made possible by the grace of God. There have been many great and brilliant assemblies in the Mansion House, but its halls were never devoted to a higher purpose than when mitred leaders of the Episcopal Church, and renowned ministers and laymen belonging to other denominations, united with the Lord Mayor in giving welcomes and gratulations to Robert Moffat.

The last time Dr. Moffat appeared in public was to lay the foundation stone of a Congregational chapel at Hampstead. In his later as in his earlier life he endeavoured to glorify God by submission to His will. Peacefully and hope-

fully he died at Leigh, near Tunbridge Wells, on August 9th, 1883. He was in the eighty-eighth year of his age when the signal for his departure was given, and the glories of heaven opened before his ransomed soul.

He was buried in Norwood Cemetery on Thursday, August 16th. The body was brought from Leigh the previous day to the house of a gentleman at Tulse Hill. Thence it was taken in an open funeral car drawn by four black horses, to the Tulse Hill Wesleyan Chapel. There were no plumes on the heads of the horses, and no mutes carried ensigns of mourning, but the coffin was beautifully garlanded with flowers. The car was followed by a long procession of carriages, containing relatives and personal friends of the departed saint, and deputations from missionary societies and other religious institutions. Some tall and graceful plants had been taken to the chapel, and formed a natural canopy above the coffin during the service. The notes of 'O rest in the Lord' having been sounded from the organ, Dr. M'Ewen, minister of the Presbyterian Church at Clapham, read appropriate selections of Holy Scripture, and offered prayer, entreating Divine help and consolation for the daughter who had tended Dr. Moffat with such filial devotion, and imploring blessing on missionary work. Then the Rev. J. C. Harrison gave an address, in which, describing Dr. Moffat as he was on his first visit to England, he said: 'Tall, strong, symmetrical in body, a noble face, eye

keen, penetrating, yet softening into great tenderness, a voice rich and flexible, with tone of sweetest pathos, a manner perfectly natural, although his dialect might be a little uncouth at first, he laid his spell upon those who heard him. He had a vivid imagination, and when he came to describe scenes, you felt sure you must have been present on those occasions. O, you could listen unwearied for hours to the tales of his enterprises, of his dangers amidst wild beasts, and men fiercer and wilder still; of his interviews with chiefs, of his preaching the Gospel, of the progress of civilisation, of native converts and native teachers. As you listened, you felt you wished to listen on and catch the glow of inspiration which he manifested. Like Cæsar, he not only did the greatest deeds and won the greatest victories, but narrated them in words that were more than a match for his deeds. So it was with our friend Robert Moffat.'

Mr. Harrison closed his address by saying: 'My dear friends, great men are the special gifts that God bestows upon this world. They are not simply the product of the age or circumstances, but they are raised up by God, and equipped by Him just to fit in with the circumstances that mould and fix the character of the age. Therefore we are not afraid to speak of them in such terms as their memories deserve; therefore we are anxious to show that we do appreciate God's gifts; therefore we bless God for them. *And now, from the very depth of our heart, we*

bless God for Robert Moffat, and multitudes in South Africa would respond with a loud "Amen." We love to contemplate the life of our honoured friend, because his life and work show what the Gospel can do. Yes, there is a beauty of character, no doubt, in the secular sphere, and there are discoverers and inventors and workers and conquerors that may be called "great;" but in the Christian hero, at once saint, philanthropist, evangelist, missionary, we discern a spiritual element, a celestial tone, a Divine purpose, which lift life to a higher level, and give it altogether a different complexion. And this highest type can spring from the Gospel alone. Therefore we love to see it, and hold it up, that men may see what God's own hand by His Gospel can effect.

'And, finally, we love to contemplate such a life because of the influence it exerts upon others. Principles, however noble, when viewed in the abstract, produce very little effect. It is when they shine in the life that they become almost omnipotent. You may commend valour as long as you please, and perhaps not make a single soul brave; but the deeds of Curtius and Leonidas have caused many a thrill through a young heart, and made the young man brave. You may extol the beauty of self-devotedness, and produce no effect whatever; but the lives of Bernard, and Henry Martyn, and Carey, and Knill, and Morrison, and Phillip, and John Williams, and Robert Moffat—these two last, friends at the beginning, and now joined before the heavenly

throne—it is these that have inspired the missionary spirit in many a young man and woman, and sent them on God's own work. Whilst we stand before the coffin of Robert Moffat, his grand work seems to rise before us. Are there no young people here that feel they must yield to the influence? Are there none now ready to be baptized for the dead? Lord of all power and might, send down on young hearts present Thy Holy Spirit, that they may devote themselves, as our brother did, to this grand work, and then receive the same crown which he now wears—the crown of eternal life.'

When the service in the chapel was over, the coffin, followed by the mourners and friends, was taken to the cemetery, and with appropriate solemnities lowered into the grave, which already held the dust of the missionary's gracious and heroic wife. The Rev. J. G. Rogers, addressing the company at the grave, said, after picturing a bright future for South Africa: 'But, whatever destiny of this kind may be before it, whatever honours may await it in the future of the world's story, however its people may be Christianised and civilised, of this we may feel certain, that the higher it rises the more will the name of Robert Moffat be appreciated, and that amongst its most illustrious teachers, chiefs, and heroes, the name of this Christian missionary will be for ever and for ever enshrined. O, where is the place of greatness to be found? Shall we seek it in the *pursuits* of ambition? Shall we find it in the

endeavour to pile up wealth and honour and human glory? Will greatness come to the child of genius, to the mere wielder of power, to the possessor of wealth? Ah, no! Here is a simple, humble-minded man, a man who impressed every one who met him with his guilelessness, his unselfishness, his lofty elevation of character, his purity of motive; here is the man whose one desire on earth was to do God's will himself, and to get others to do it also; and on him comes the blessing of numbers who were ready to perish; on him comes the blessing of multitudes rescued from darkness and sin in South Africa; on him comes the blessing of the Churches of England who have felt the inspiration of his zeal and the quickening of his spiritual power. Yes, he is honoured because he knew nothing among men but Christ Jesus and Him crucified—not Church, not creed, as compared with Christ, himself least of all; for to him the glory was that he might himself be nothing and Christ be all in all. He is gone, but the work remains; he is gone, but the standard of the Cross has still to be uplifted; he is gone, but the Master lives and summons us to His service. O, who is there here—who is there amongst the Churches that will catch the mantle of him who has ascended up into glory, and by God's grace become a missionary of the Cross, as true, as noble, as unselfish, as courageous, as this great apostle of South Africa?'

Dr. Moffat's work was so practical, so grand in its issues, that even the secular press, too often

ready to sneer at missionaries as ineffectual sentimentalists, did homage to his character, and eulogised his labours. The following is from the *Pall Mall Gazette*: 'The death of Dr. Moffat removes one not unworthy to be numbered among those apostles of savage tribes to whom the child-like enthusiasm of an earlier age accorded the honour of canonisation. The nineteenth century has its saints and its martyrs not less than any of those that preceded it; and although we build no abbeys in their honour, they are not less worthy to be held in remembrance by mankind than St. Alban or St. Helier, or any of the great missionary saints who spent their lives in civilising the rude barbarians of Europe. Bechuanas are, perhaps, more tractable than the vigorous Norsemen who first slew and then worshipped the messengers of the Cross; but the self-denying labours of Dr. Moffat at Kuruman lose none of their lustre because, unlike many of his fellows, the life which he had often hazarded was never taken.'

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